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MASTERMAN READY;

OR,

THE WRECK OF THE PACIFIC.

WRITTEN FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.

BY

CAPTAIN MARRYAT.

A New Edition, in Two Volumes,

EMBELLISHED WITH NINETY-TWO ENGRAVINGS ON WOOD.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

HENRY G. BOHN, YORK-STREET, COVENT GARDEN.

1854.

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PREFACE.

I PROMISED my children to write a book for them. It was a hasty promise, for I never considered whether I was capable of so doing. On my requesting to know what kind of a book they would prefer, they said that they wished me to continue a work called the "Swiss Family Robinson," which had never been completed, and which appeared peculiarly to interest them. I sent for the work and read it: it was orignally written in German, translated into French, and from French into English,—a very fair evidence of its merits as amusing to children; but I found difficulties which were to me insurmountable, and which decided me not to continue that work, but to write another in the same style; and I mention this more with a view to prevent any accusation of plagiarism, than

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with any intent to depreciate the work referred to. I have said that it is very amusing; but the fault which I find in it is, that it does not adhere to the probable, or even the possible, which should ever be the case in a book, even if fictitious, when written for children. I pass over the seamanship, or rather the want of it, which occasions impossibilities to be performed on board of the wreck, as that is not a matter of any consequence: as in the comedy, where, when people did not understand Greek, Irish did just as well, so it is with a large portion of the seamanship displayed in naval writings. But what compelled me to abandon the task was, that much ignorance, or carelessness, had been displayed in describing the vegetable and animal productions of the island on which the family had been wrecked. The island is supposed to be far to the southward, near to Van Diemen's Land; yet in these temperate latitudes we have not only plants, but animals introduced, which could only be found in the interior of Africa or the torrid zone, mixed up with those really indigenous to the climate. This was an error which I could

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not persuade myself to follow up. It is true that it is a child's book; but I consider, for that very reason, it is necessary that the author should be particular in what may appear to be trifles, but which really are not, when it is remembered how strong the impressions are upon the juvenile mind. Fiction, when written for young people, should, at all events, be *based* upon truth; and I could not continue a narrative under the objections which I have stated.

Whether I have succeeded or not in the construction of my own, is another question. I shall, however, take the opinions of the children, rather than of the critics, on this point. My idea is, to show the practical man in Ready, and the theoretical in the father of the family; and, as the work advances, to enter more deeply into questions which may induce children to think, or, by raising their curiosity, stimulate them to seek for information.

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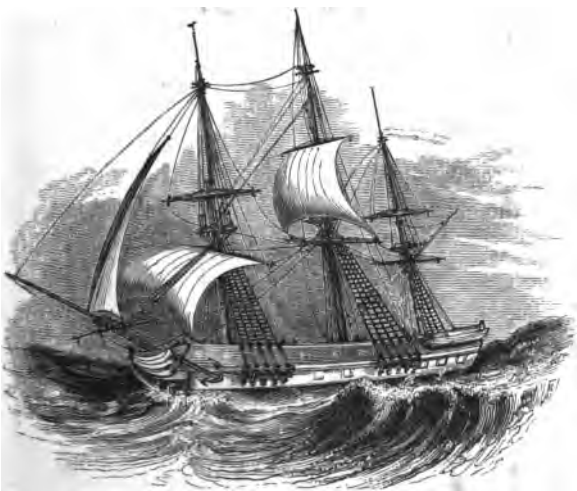
MASTERMAN READY;

OR,

THE WRECK OF THE PACIFIC.



SHIP BEFORE THE WIND.

CHAPTER I.

It was in the month of October, 18—, that the Pacific, a large ship, was running before a heavy gale of wind in the middle of the vast Atlantic

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Ocean. She had but little sail, for the wind was so strong, that the canvas would have been split into pieces by the furious blasts before which she was driven through the waves, which were very high, and following her almost as fast as she darted through their boiling waters; sometimes heaving up her stern and sinking her bows down so deep into the hollow of the sea, that it appeared as if she would have dived down underneath the waves; but she was a fine vessel, and the captain was a good seaman, who did what he considered best for the safety of his vessel, and then put his trust in that Providence who is ever watchful over us.

The captain stood before the wheel, watching the men who were steering the ship; for when you are running before a heavy gale, it requires great attention to the helm: and as he looked around him and up at the heavens, he sung in a low voice the words of a sea song:—

"One wide water all around us,
All above us one black sky."

And so it was with them;—they were in the middle of the Atlantic, not another vessel to be seen, and the heavens were covered with black clouds, which were borne along furiously by the

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gale; the sea ran mountains high, and broke into large white foaming crests, while the fierce wind howled through the rigging of the vessel.

Besides the captain of the ship and the two men at the wheel, there were two other personages on deck: one was a young lad about twelve years old, and the other a weather-beaten old seaman, whose grisly locks were streaming in the wind, as he paced aft and looked over the taffrail of the vessel.

The young lad, observing a heavy sea coming up to the stern of the vessel, caught hold of the old man's arm, crying out,—"Won't that great wave come into us, Ready?"

"No, Master William, it will not: don't you see how the ship lifts her quarters to it?—and now it has passed underneath us. But it might happen, and then what would become of you, if I did not hold on, and hold you on also? You would be washed overboard."

"I don't like the sea much, Ready; I wish we were safe on shore again," replied the lad. "Don't the waves look as if they wished to beat the ship all to pieces?"

"Yes, they do; and they roar as if angry because they cannot bury the vessel beneath them: but I

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am used to them, Master Willy, and with a good ship like this, and a good captain and crew, I don't care for them."

"But sometimes ships do sink, and then everybody is drowned."

"Yes, Master William; and very often the very ships sink which those on board think are most safe. We can only do our best, and after that we must submit to the will of Heaven."

"What little birds are those flying about so close to the water?"

STORMY PETRELS.

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"Those are Mother Carey's chickens, Master William, as we sailors call them. You seldom see them except in a storm, or when a storm is coming on."

The birds which William referred to were the stormy petrels.

"Were you ever shipwrecked on a desolate island, like Robinson Crusoe?"

"Yes, Master William, I have been shipwrecked; but I never heard of Robinson Crusoe. So many have been wrecked and undergone great hardships, and so many more have never lived to tell what they have suffered, that it's not very likely that I should have known that one man you speak of, out of so many."

"Oh! but it's all in a book which I have read. I could tell you all about it—and so I will when the ship is quiet again; but now I wish you would help me down below, for I promised mamma not to stay up long."

"Then always keep your promises like a good lad," replied the old man; "now give me your hand, and I'll answer for it that we will fetch the hatchway without a tumble; and when the weather is fine again, I'll tell you how I was wrecked, and you shall tell me all about Robinson Crusoe."

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Having seen Master William safe to the cabin door, the old seaman returned to the deck, for it was his watch.

Masterman Ready, for such was his name, had been more than fifty years at sea, having been bound apprentice to a collier which sailed from South Shields, when he was only ten years old. His face was browned from long exposure, and there were deep furrows on his cheeks, but he was still a hale and active man. He had served many years on board of a man-of-war, and had been in every climate: he had many strange stories to tell, and he might be believed even when his stories were strange, for he would not tell an untruth. He could navigate a vessel, and, of course, he could read and write; he had read his Bible over and over again. The name of Ready was very well suited to him, for he was seldom at a loss; and in cases of difficulty and danger, the captain would not hesitate to ask his opinion, and frequently take his advice. He was on board as second mate of the vessel.

The Pacific was, as we have before observed, a very fine ship, and well able to contend with the most violent storm. She was of more than four hundred tons burthen, and was then making a

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passage out to New South Wales, with a valuable cargo of English hardware, cutlery, and other manufactures. The captain was a good navigator and seaman, and moreover a good man, of a cheerful, happy disposition, always making the best of every thing, and when accidents did happen, always more inclined to laugh than to look grave. His name was Osborn. The first mate, whose name was Mackintosh, was a Scotsman, rough and ill-tempered, but paying strict attention to his duty—a man that Captain Osborn could trust, but whom he did not like.

Ready we have already spoken of, and it will not be necessary to say anything about the seamen on board, except that there were thirteen of them, hardly a sufficient number to man so large a vessel; but just as they were about to sail, five of the seamen, who did not like the treatment they had received from Mackintosh, the first mate, had left the ship, and Captain Osborn did not choose to wait until he could obtain others in their stead. This proved unfortunate, as the events which we shall hereafter relate will show.

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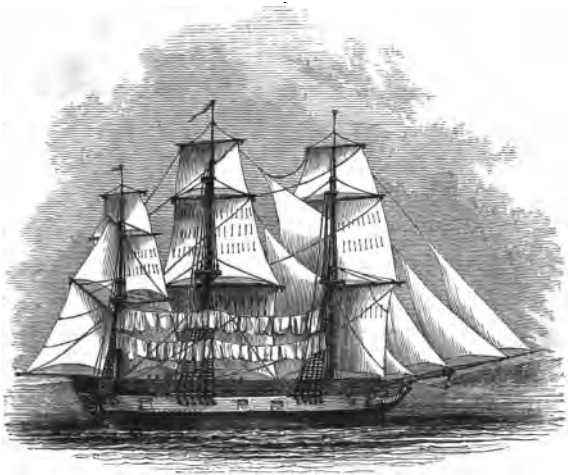

VESSEL WITH CLOTHES IN THE RIGGING.

CHAPTER II.

MASTER WILLIAM, whom we have introduced to the reader, was the eldest boy of a family who were passengers on board, consisting of the father, mother, and four children: his father was a Mr. Seagrave, a very well-informed clever man, who having for many years held an office under government at Sydney, the principal town in New South Wales, was now returning from a leave of

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absence of three years. He had purchased from the government several thousand acres of land; it had since risen very much in value, and the sheep and cattle which he had put on it were proving a source of great profit. His property had been well managed by the person who had charge of it during his absence in England, and he was now taking out with him a variety of articles of every description for its improvement, and for his own use; such as furniture for his house, implements of agriculture, seeds, plants, cattle, and many other things too numerous to mention.

Mrs. Seagrave was an amiable woman, but not in very strong health. The family consisted of William, who was the eldest, a clever steady boy, but, at the same time, full of mirth and humour; Thomas, who was six years old, a very thoughtless but good-tempered boy, full of mischief, and always in a scrape; Caroline, a little girl of seven years; and Albert, a fine strong little fellow, who was not one year old: he was under the charge of a black girl who had come from the Cape of Good Hope to Sydney, and had followed Mrs. Seagrave to England. We have now mentioned all the people on board of the Pacific: perhaps we ought not to forget two shepherd's dogs, be-

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longing to Mr. Seagrave, and a little terrier, which was a great favourite of Captain Osborn, to whom she belonged. And now we will proceed:—It was not until the fourth day from its commencement that the gale abated, and then it gradually subsided until it was nearly a calm. The men who had been watching night after night during the gale, now brought all their clothes which had been drenched by the rain and spray, and hung them up in the rigging to dry: the sails also which had been furled, and had been saturated by the wet, were now loosened and spread out, that they might not be mildewed. The wind blew mild and soft, the sea had gone down, and the ship was running through the water at the speed of about four miles an hour. Mrs. Seagrave, wrapped up in a cloak, was seated upon one of the arm-chests near the stern of the ship, her husband and children were all with her enjoying the fine weather, when Captain Osborn, who had been taking an observation of the sun with his sextant, came up to them.

"Well, Master Tommy, you are very glad that the gale is over?"

"I didn't care," replied Tommy, "only I spilt all my soup. But Juno tumbled off her chair,

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and rolled away with the baby, till papa picked them both up."

"It was a mercy that poor Albert was not killed," observed Mrs. Seagrave.

"And so he might have been, if Juno had not thought only of him and nothing at all about herself," replied Mr. Seagrave.

"That's very true, sir," replied Captain Osborn. "She saved the child, and, I fear, hurt herself."

"I thump my head very hard," said Juno, smiling.

"Yes, and it's lucky that you have a good thick woolly coat over it," replied Captain Osborn, laughing. "Never mind, Juno, you are a good girl."

"It is 12 o'clock by the sun, sir," said Mackintosh, the first mate, to the captain.

"Then bring me up the latitude, Mr. Mackintosh, while I work out the longitude from the sights which I took this morning. In five minutes, Mr. Seagrave, I shall be ready to prick off over our place on the chart."

"Here are the dogs come up on deck," said William; "I dare say they are as glad of the fine weather as we are. Come here, Romulus! Here, Remus!—Remus!"

"Well, sir," said Ready, who was standing by

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them with his quadrant in his hand, "I should like to ask you a question. Those dogs of yours have two very odd names, which I never heard before. Who were Romulus and Remus?"

SHEPHERDS' DOGS.

"Romulus and Remus," replied Mr. Seagrave, "were the names of two shepherds, brothers, who in ancient days founded the city of Rome, which eventually became the largest and most

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celebrated empire in the world. They were the first kings of Rome, and reigned together."

"And they were suckled by a wolf, Ready," continued William; "what do you think of that?"

"It was a queer kind of wet nurse, Master William," replied Ready.

"And Romulus killed Remus," said William.

"No wonder, after the way he was brought up, Master William," answered Ready; "but why did he kill him?"

"For jumping too high," replied William, laughing.

"Is Master William joking?" said Ready, appealing to Mr. Seagrave.

"Yes, he is, and he is not. History says that Remus affronted Romulus by leaping over a wall he had raised, and Romulus, in his anger, took away his life; but the history of early days is not to be depended upon."

"No, nor the brothers either, it appears," replied Ready; "however, it is the old story—two of a trade can never agree. One sometimes hears of Rome now—is that the same place?"

"Yes," replied William, "it is the remains of the old city."

"Well, one lives and learns," said Ready; "I

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have learnt something to-day, which every one will to the last day of his life, if he will only ask questions. I'm an old man, and perhaps don't know much, except in the seafaring way; but I should have known much less if I did not ask for information, and was not ashamed to acknowledge my ignorance; that's the way to learn, Master William."

"Very good advice, Ready,—and, William, I hope you will profit by it," said Mr. Seagrave; "never be ashamed to ask the meaning of what you do not understand."

"I always do, papa. Do I not ask you questions, Ready?"

"Yes, you do, and very clever questions for a boy of your age, Master William; and I only wish that I could answer them better than I can sometimes."

"I should like to go down now, my dear," said Mrs. Seagrave; "perhaps Ready will see the baby down safe."

"That I will, Ma'am," said Ready, putting his quadrant on the capstern: "now, Juno, give me the child, and go down first;—stern foremost, you stupid girl! how often do I tell you that? Some day or another you will come down with a run."

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"And break my head," said Juno.

"Yes, or break your arm; and then who is to hold the child?"

As soon as they were all down in the cabin, the captain and Mr. Seagrave marked the position of the vessel on the chart, and found that they were one hundred and thirty miles from the Cape of Good Hope.

"If the wind holds, we shall be in to-morrow," said Mr. Seagrave to his wife. "Juno, perhaps you may see your father and mother."

Poor Juno shook her head, and a tear or two stole down her dark cheek. With a mournful face she told them, that her father and mother belonged to a Dutch boor, who had gone with them many miles into the interior: she had been parted from them when quite a little child, and had been left at Cape Town.

"But you are free now, Juno," said Mrs. Seagrave; "you have been to England, and whoever puts his foot on shore in England, becomes from that moment free."

"Yes, Missy, I free; but still I have no fader or moder," replied Juno, weeping. But little Albert patted her cheek, and she was soon smiling again, and playing with the little boy.

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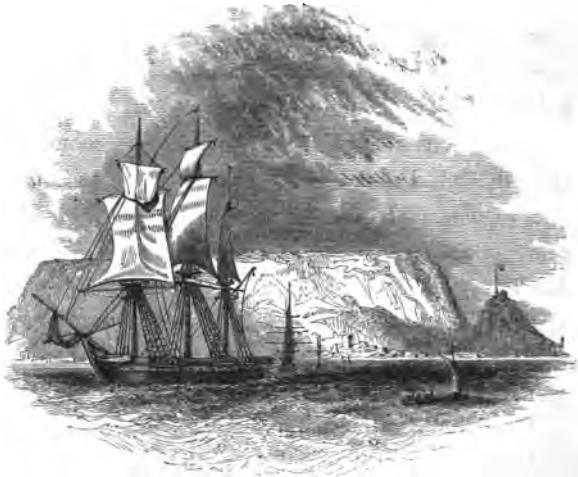

SHIP IN TABLE BAY.

CHAPTER III.

The next morning the Pacific arrived at the Cape, and anchored in Table Bay.

"Why do they call this Table Bay, Ready?" said William.

"I suppose it's because they call that great mountain the Table Mountain," Master William; "you see how flat the mountain is on the top."

"Yes, it is quite as flat as a table."

"Yes, and sometimes you will see the white

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clouds rolling down over the top of it in a very curious manner; and that the sailors call spreading the tablecloth: it is a sign of bad weather."

"Then I hope they will not spread the tablecloth while we are here, Ready," said William, "for I shall certainly have no appetite. We have had bad weather enough already, and mamma suffers so much from it. What a pretty place it is!"

"We shall remain here two days, sir," said Captain Osborn to Mr. Seagrave, "if you and Mrs. Seagrave would like to go on shore."

"I will go down and ask Mrs. Seagrave," said her husband, who went down the ladder, followed by William.

Upon the question being put to Mrs. Seagrave, she replied that she was quite satisfied with the ship having no motion, and did not feel herself equal to going on shore; it was therefore decided that she should remain on board with the two younger children, and that, on the following day, Mr. Seagrave should take William and Tommy to see Cape Town, and return on board before night.

The next morning, Captain Osborn lowered down one of the large boats, and Mr. Seagrave, accompanied by Captain Osborn, went on shore with William and Tommy. Tommy had promised

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his mamma to be very good; but that he always did, and almost always forgot his promise directly he was out of sight. As soon as they landed, they went up to a gentleman's house, with whom Captain Osborn was acquainted. They stayed for a few minutes to drink a glass of lemonade, for it was very warm; and then it was proposed that they should go to the Company's Gardens, and see the wild beasts which were confined there, at which William was much delighted, and Tommy clapped his hands with joy.

"What are the Company's Gardens, papa?" inquired William.

"They were made by the Dutch East-India Company, at the time that the Cape of Good Hope was in their possession. They are, properly speaking, Botanical Gardens; but, at the same time, the wild animals are kept there. Formerly there were a great many, but they have not been paid attention to lately, for we have plenty of these animals in England now."

"What shall we see?" said Tommy.

"You will see lions, Tommy, a great many in a large den together," said Captain Osborn.

"Oh! I want to see a lion."

"You must not go too near them, recollect."

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"No I won't," said Tommy.

As soon as they entered the gates, Tommy escaped from Captain Osborn, and ran away in his hurry to see the lions; but Captain Osborn caught him again, and held him fast by the hand.

"Here is a pair of very strange birds," said the gentleman who accompanied them; "they are called Secretaries, on account of the feathers which hang behind their heads, as the feather of a pen does when a clerk puts it behind his ear: but they are very useful, for they are snake-killers; indeed,

SECRETARY BIRD.

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they would, if they could, live altogether upon snakes, which they are very great enemies to, never letting one escape. They strike them with their feet, and with such force as to kill them immediately."

"Are there many snakes in this country?" inquired William.

"Yes, and very venomous snakes," replied Mr. Seagrave; "so that these birds are very useful in destroying them. You observe, William, that the Almighty, in his wisdom, has so arranged it that no animal (especially of a noxious kind) shall be multiplied to excess, but kept under by being preyed upon by some other; indeed, wherever in any country an animal exists in any quantity, there is generally found another animal which destroys it. The Secretary inhabits this country, where snakes exist in numbers, that it may destroy them: in England the bird would be of little value."

"But some animals are too large or too fierce to be destroyed by others, papa; for instance, the elephant and the lion."

"Very true; but these larger animals do not breed so fast, and therefore their numbers do not increase so rapidly. For instance, a pair of

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elephants will not have more than one young one in the space of two years or more; while the rabbits, which are preyed upon and the food of so many other beasts as well as birds, would increase enormously, if they were not destroyed. I have read that a pair of rabbits, from themselves and their progeny also breeding so fast, will arrive to many hundreds in the course of a single year. Examine through the whole of creation, and you will find that there is an unerring Hand, which invariably preserves the balance exact; and that there are no more mouths than for which food is provided, although accidental circumstances may for a time occasion a slight alteration."

They continued their walk until they came to the den of the lions. It was a large place, inclosed with a streng and high wall of stone, with only one window to it for the visitors to look at them, as it was open above. This window was wide, and with strong iron bars running from the top to the bottom; but the width between the bars was such that a lion could put his paw out with ease; and they were therefore cautioned not to go too near. It was a fine sight to see eight or ten of these noble-looking animals lying

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distance from every one of them. He wouldn't even go near to a Cape sheep with a broad tail.

When they had seen every thing, they went back to the gentleman's house to dinner; and, after dinner, they returned on board, when Tommy's adventure with the lion was told to his mother, who declared that she never should be able to trust him out of her sight.

TOMMY AND THE LION.

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FAIR WIND.—STUDDING SAILS SET.

CHAPTER IV.

THE following morning the fresh water and provisions were received on board, and once more the Pacific stretched her broad canvas to the winds, and there was every prospect of a rapid voyage, as for many days she continued her passage with a fair wind and flowing sheet. But this did not continue: it fell calm, and remained so for nearly three days, during which not a breath of

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wind was to be seen on the wide expanse of water; all nature appeared as if in repose, except that now and then an albatross would drop down at some distance from the stern of the vessel, and as he swam lazily along with his wings half furled, pick up the fragments of food which had been thrown over the side.

"What great bird is that, Ready?" inquired William.

"It is an albatross, Master William, the largest

ALBATROSS.

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sea-bird we have. Their wings are very long. I have seen them shot, and they have measured eleven feet from the tip of one wing to the tip of the other when the wings have been spread out."

"It is the first one that I have seen," said William.

"Because you seldom meet them north of the Cape, sir: people do say that they go to sleep on the wing, balancing themselves high up in the air."

"Papa," said William, turning to Mr. Seagrave, who stood by, "why is it that one bird can swim and another cannot? You recollect when Tommy drove the hens into the large pond, they flounced about, and their feathers became wet, and would support them no longer, and then they were drowned. Now, how does a sea-bird contrive to remain so long on the water?"

"Because a sea-bird, William, is provided with a sort of oil, on purpose to anoint the outside of its feathers, and this oil prevents the water from penetrating them. Have you not observed the ducks on shore dressing their feathers with their bills? They were then using this oil to make their feathers waterproof."

"How odd!"

"Don't say how odd, William; that is not an

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expression to use when we talk of the wonderful provisions made by the Almighty hand, who neglects not the meanest of his creatures—say rather how wonderful!"

"That's very true, sir," observed Ready; "but still you must not be too hard upon Master William, for I have heard many a grown-up man make use of the same expression."

"They were not better taught when they were young, Ready."

"Perhaps so, sir; and Master William should be thankful that he has a father who does take the trouble. But here comes Juno to tell you that tea is ready."

On the third day of the calm, the barometer fell so low as to induce Captain Osborn to believe that they should have a severe gale, and every preparation was made to meet it, should it come on. Nor was he mistaken: towards midnight the clouds gathered up fast, and as they gathered up in thick piles, heaped one over the other, the lightning darted through them in every direction; and as the clouds rose up, so did the wind, but at first only in heavy gusts, and then lulling again to a calm.

"Ready," said Captain Osborn, "how do you think we shall have the wind?"

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"Why, Captain Osborn, to tell you the truth, I don't think it will be steady to one point long. It may at first blow hard from the north, but it's my idea it will shift soon to some other quarter, and blow still harder."

"What think you, Mackintosh?"

"We'll have plenty of it, and a long steady gale, that's my notion; and the sooner we ship the dead lights the better."

Mr. Seagrave, with William, happened to be standing by at the time of this conversation, and at the term *dead* lights Willy's face expressed some anxiety. Ready perceived it, and said,—

"That's a foolish name they give to the shutters which go over the cabin-windows to prevent the water from breaking into the cabin when a vessel sails before the wind; you know we had them on the last time that we had a gale, so don't you go down to frighten your mother by telling her that the dead lights are shipped."

"I was not afraid, Ready, but I was thinking of my mother, I acknowledge; she has been so very weak these last two days."

"But, Ready," said Captain Osborn, "why do you think that we shall have a shift of wind?"

"Well, I don't know; perhaps I was wrong,"

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replied the old man, "and Mr. Mackintosh is right: the wind does seem to come steady from the north-east, that's certain;" and Ready walked away to the binnacle, and looked at the compass. Mr. Seagrave and William then went below, and Mr. Mackintosh went forward to give his orders. As soon as they were all gone, Ready went up again to Captain Osborn, and said—

"Captain Osborn, it's not for me to contradict Mr. Mackintosh, but that's of little consequence in a time like this: I should have held to my opinion, had it not been that the gentleman passenger and his son were standing by; but now, as the coast is clear, I tell you that we shall have something worse than a gale of wind. I have been in these latitudes before, and I am an old seaman, as you know. There's something in the air, and there has been something during the last three days of calm, which reminds me too well of what I have seen here before; and I am sure that we shall have little better than a hurricane, as far as wind goes—and worse in one point, that it will last much longer than hurricanes generally do. I have been watching, and even the birds tell me so, and they are told by their nature, which is never mistaken. That calm has been nothing more

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than a repose of the winds previous to their being roused up to do their worst; and that is my real opinion."

"Well, and I am inclined to agree with you, Ready; so we must send top-gallant yards down on deck, and all the small sails and lumber out of the tops. Get the try-sail aft and bent, and lower down the gaff. I will go forward."

They had no time to lose: their preparations were hardly complete before the wind had settled to a fierce gale from the north-east. The sea rose rapidly; topsail after topsail was furled; and by dusk the Pacific was flying through the water with the wind on her quarter, under reefed foresail and storm staysail. It was with difficulty that three men at the wheel could keep the helm, such were the blows which the vessel received from the heavy seas on the quarter. Not one seaman in the ship took advantage of his watch below to go to sleep that night, careless as they generally are; the storm was too dreadful. About three o'clock in the morning the wind suddenly subsided; it was but for a minute or two, and then it again burst on the vessel from another quarter of the compass, as Ready had foretold, splitting the foresail into fragments, which lashed and flogged the

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wind till they were torn away by it, and carried far to leeward. The heavens above were of a pitchy darkness, and the only light was from the creaming foam of the sea on every side. The shift of wind, which had been to the west-north-west, compelled them to alter the course of the vessel, for they had no chance but to scud, as they now did, under bare poles; but in consequence of the sea having taken its run from the former wind, which had been north-east, it was, as sailors call it, *cross*, and every minute the waves poured over the ship, sweeping all before their weight of waters. One poor man was washed overboard, and any attempt made to save him would have been unavailing. Captain Osborn was standing by the weather gunnel, holding on by one of the belaying pins, when he said to Mackintosh, who was near him,

"How long will this last, think you?"

"Longer than the ship will," replied the mate, gravely.

"I should hope not," replied the captain; "still it cannot look worse. What do you think, Ready?"

"Far more fear from above than from below just now," replied Ready, pointing to the yard-arms

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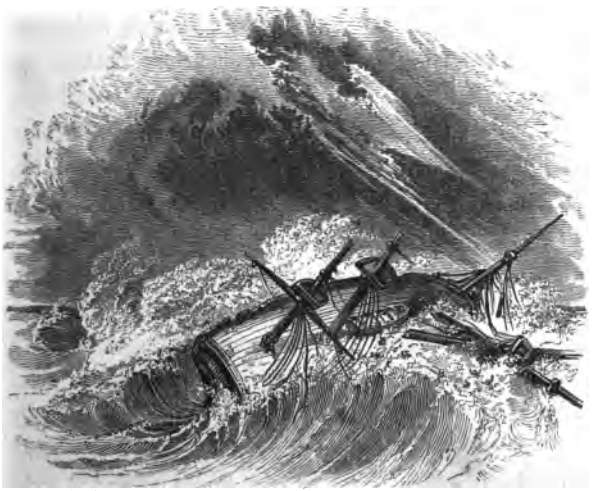
of the ship, to each of which were little balls of electric matter attached, flaring out to a point. "Look at those two clouds, sir, rushing at each other; if I——"

Ready had not time to finish what he would have said, before a blaze of light, so dazzling that it left them all in utter darkness for some seconds afterwards, burst upon their vision, accompanied with a peal of thunder at which the whole vessel trembled fore and aft. A crash—



STRUCK BY LIGHTNING.

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a rushing forward—and a shriek were heard, and when they had recovered their eyesight, the foremast had been rent by the lightning as if it had been a lath, and the ship was in flames; the men at the wheel, blinded by the lightning, as well as appalled, could not steer; the ship broached to—away went the mainmast over the side—and all was wreck, confusion, and dismay.

Fortunately the heavy seas which poured over the forecastle soon extinguished the flames, or they all must have perished; but the ship lay now helpless, and at the mercy of the waves, beating violently against the wrecks of the masts which floated to leeward, but were still held fast to the vessel by their rigging. As soon as they could recover from the shock, Ready and the first mate hastened to the wheel to try to get the ship before the wind; but this they could not do, as, the foremast and mainmast being gone, the mizenmast prevented her paying off and answering to the helm. Ready, having persuaded two of the men to take the helm, made a sign to Mackintosh (for now the wind was so loud that they could not hear each other speak), and, going aft, they obtained axes, and cut away the mizen-rigging; the mizen-topmast and head of the mizenmast went over the side, and then

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the stump of the foremast was sufficient to get the ship before the wind again. Still there was much delay and much confusion, before they could clear away the wreck of the masts; and, as soon as they could make inquiry, they found that four of the men had been killed by the lightning and the fall of the foremast, and there were now but eight remaining, besides Captain Osborn and his two mates.

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SCUDDING UNDER SAIL.

CHAPTER V.

SAILORS are never discouraged by danger as long as they have any chance of relieving themselves by their own exertions. The loss of their shipmates, so instantaneously summoned away,—the wrecked state of the vessel,—the wild surges burying them beneath their angry waters,—the howling of the wind—the dazzling of the lightning, and the pealing of the thunder, did not prevent

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them from doing what their necessity demanded. Mackintosh, the first mate, rallied the men, and contrived himself to fix a block and strap to the still smoking stump of the foremast; a rope was rove through the block, and the main-top-gallant sail hoisted, so that the vessel might run faster before the gale, and answer her helm better than she did.

The ship was again before the wind, and comparatively safe, notwithstanding the heavy blows she now received from the pursuing waves. Night again came on, but there was no repose, and the men were worn out with exposure and fatigue. Captain Osborn and Ready had often gone down to afford some assistance and comfort to the passengers in the cabin. Mrs. Seagrave, worn out with fear and anxiety, had become seriously unwell, and her husband watched her; the children were persuaded to remain in their beds, and the infant never left the arms of the patient and unwearied Juno.

The third day of the gale dawned, but the appearances were as alarming as ever: the continual breaking of the seas over the stern had washed away the binnacles, and it was impossible now to be certain of the course the ship had been

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steered, or the distance which had been run; the leaky state of the vessel proved how much she had already suffered from the violent shocks which she had received, and the certainty was apparent, that if the weather did not abate, she could not possibly withstand the force of the waves much longer.

The countenance of Captain Osborn showed great anxiety: he had a heavy responsibility on his shoulders—he might lose a valuable ship, and still more valuable cargo, even if they did not all lose their lives; for they were now approaching where the sea was studded with low coral islands, upon which they might be thrown by the waves and wind, without having the slightest power to prevent it in their present disabled condition.

Ready was standing by him when Captain Osborn said,—

"I don't much like this, Ready; we are now running on danger, and have no help for it."

"That's true enough," replied Ready: "we have no help for it; it is God's will, sir, and his will be done."

"Amen," replied Captain Osborn, solemnly; and then he continued, after a pause, "There were many captains who envied me when I ob-

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tained command of this fine ship,—would they change with me now?"

"I should rather think not, Captain Osborn; but you never know what the day may bring forth. You sailed with this vessel, full of hope—you now, not without reason, feel something approaching to despair; but who knows? it may please the Almighty to rebuke those angry winds and waves, and to-morrow we may again hope for the best; at all events you have done your duty—no man can do more. I do wish that Mr. Mackintosh would not swear so; I always think that the winds blow harder, as if angry that their Divine Master should be defied by such poor worms as we are."

"You are right," replied Captain Osborn; "but hold hard, Ready, that sea's aboard of us."

Ready had just time to cling with both hands to the belaying pins when the sea poured over the vessel, with a volume of water which for some time swept them off their legs: they clung on firmly, and at last recovered their feet.

"She started a timber or two with that blow, I rather think," said Ready, as he took off his hat to shake the water from it.

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"I'm afraid so; the best vessel ever built could not stand such shocks long," replied Captain Osborn; "and at present, with our weak crew, I do not see that we can get more sail upon her."

All that night the ship flew in darkness before the gale. At daybreak the wind abated, and the sea went down: the ship was, however, still kept before the wind, for she had suffered too much to venture to put her broadside to the sea. Preparations were now made for getting up jury-masts; and the worn-out seamen were busily employed, under the direction of Captain Osborn and his two mates, when Mr. Seagrave and William came upon deck.

William stared about him: he perceived, to his astonishment, that the tall masts, with all their rigging and sails, had disappeared, and that the whole deck was in a state of confusion and disorder.

"See, my child," said Mr. Seagrave, "the wreck and devastation which are here. See how the pride of man is humbled before the elements of the great Jehovah."

"Ay, Master Willy," said old Ready, "look around you, as you well may. Do you remember the verses in the Bible?—if not, I remember them

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well, for I have often read them, and have often felt the truth of them: 'They that go down into the sea in ships, that do business in great waters, these see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep.'"

"But, father," said Willy after a pause, "how shall we ever get to Sydney without masts or sails?"

"Why, Master William," replied Ready, "we must do what we can: we sailors are never much at a loss, and I dare say before night you will find us under some sort of sail again. We have lost our great masts, so we must put up jury-masts, as we call them, that is, little ones, and little sails upon them; and, if it pleases God, we shall see Sydney yet. How is madam, sir?" continued Ready to Mr. Seagrave; "is she better?"

"I fear she is very weak and ill," replied Mr. Seagrave; "nothing but fine weather will do her any good. Do you think that it will be fine now?"

"Why, sir, to tell you the truth, I fear we shall have more of it yet: I have not given my thoughts to the captain, as I might be mistaken; but still I think so—I've not been fifty years at sea without learning something. I don't like the gathering of

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that bank there, Mr. Seagrave, and I shouldn't wonder if it were to blow again from the very same quarter, and that before dark."

"God's will be done," replied Mr. Seagrave; "but I am very fearful about my poor wife, who is completely worn to a shadow."

"I shouldn't think so much about that, sir, as I really never knew of people dying that way, although they suffer much. Master William, do you know that we have lost some of our men since you were down below?"

"No—I heard the steward say something outside about the foremast; but I did not like to ask, as mamma was so frightened."

"You were a kind boy for that, Master William; but hear me,—we have lost five of our smartest and best men; Wilson was washed overboard—Fennings and Masters struck dead with the lightning—and Jones and Emery crushed by the fall of the foremast. Master William, did any of these men imagine, when they left the Cape, or indeed the day or the hour before it happened, that their souls were to be required of them, and their bodies should be now floating hundreds of miles from the land? You are young, Master Willy, but you cannot think too early of your Maker, or call to mind what

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they say in the Burial Service,—'In the midst of life we are in death.'"

DROWNED SEAMAN.

"Thank you, Ready, thank you for the lesson you have given my son," said Mr. Seagrave; "and, William, treasure it up in your memory."

"Yes, Master William, they are the words of an old man who has seen many and many a one who was full of youth and spirits called away before him, and who is grateful to God that he has been pleased

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to preserve his life, and allow him to amend his ways. We must seek the Lord in our youth, and then we shall be prepared when he thinks fit to summon us away."

"I have been thinking," said Mr. Seagrave, after a silence of a minute or two, "that a sailor has no right to marry."

"I've always thought so, sir," replied Ready; "and I dare say many a poor deserted sailor's wife, when she has listened to the wind and rain in her lonely bed, has thought the same."

"With my permission," continued Mr. Seagrave, "my boys shall never go to sea if there is any other profession to be found for them."

"Well Mr. Seagrave, they do say that it's no use baulking a lad if he wishes to go to sea, and that if he is determined, he must go: now I think otherwise—I think a parent has a right to say no, if he pleases, upon that point; for you see, sir, a lad, at the early age at which he goes to sea, does not know his own mind. Every high-spirited boy wishes to go to sea—it's quite natural; but if the most of them were to speak the truth, it is not that they so much want to go to sea, as that they want to go from school or from home, where they are under the control of their masters or their parents."

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"Very true, Ready; they wish to be, as they consider they will be, independent."

"And a pretty mistake they make of it, sir. Why, there is not a greater slave in the world than a boy who goes to sea, for the first few years after his shipping: for once they are corrected on shore, they are punished ten times at sea, and they never again meet with the love and affection they have left behind them. It is a hard life, and there have been but few who have not bitterly repented it, and who would not have returned, like the prodigal son, and cast themselves at their fathers' feet, only that they have been ashamed."

"That's the truth, Ready, and it is on that account that I consider that a parent is justified in refusing his consent to his son going to sea, if he can properly provide for him in any other profession. There never will be any want of sailors, for there always will be plenty of poor lads whose friends can do no better for them; and in that case the seafaring life is a good one to choose, as it requires no other capital for their advancement than activity and courage."

"Exactly what I thought myself, sir," replied Ready. "May I ask how Master Tommy and the other children are, and poor Juno?"

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"They are all quite well, although they have been a little bruised with sliding about," replied Mr. Seagrave; "but I must stay here no longer, Mrs. Seagrave will want me in the cabin. William, will you stay on deck?"

"Better not, Master William, we are all too busy, and I cannot look after you now: there'll be no sleep this night for any of us, fair or foul; we are weak-handed now. So good night, gentlemen, both of you."

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MEN AT THE PUMPS.

CHAPTER VI.

Mr. Seagrave and William went down below into the cabin, where they found that there was plenty of employment; the steward had brought a basin of very hot pea-soup for the children. Tommy, who was sitting up in the bed-place with his sister, had snatched it out of Juno's left hand, for she held the baby with the other, and in so

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doing, had thrown it over Caroline, who was screaming; while Juno, in her hurry to assist Caroline, had slipped down on the deck with the baby, who was also crying with fright, although not hurt. Unfortunately, Juno had fallen down upon Vixen, the terrier, who in return had bitten her in the leg, which had made Juno also cry out; while Mrs. Seagrave was hanging her head out of her standing bed-place, frightened out of her wits at the accident, but unable to be of any assistance. Fortunately, Mr. Seagrave came down just in time to pick up Juno and the baby, and then tried to comfort little Caroline, who after all was not much scalded, as the soup had had time to cool.

"Massa Tommy is a very naughty boy," cried Juno, rubbing her leg. Master Tommy thought it better to say nothing—he was duly admonished—the steward cleaned up the mess, and order was at length restored.

In the mean time, they were not idle upon deck: the carpenter was busy fixing a step for one of the spare topmasts instead of a mainmast, and the men were fitting the rigging; the ship unfortunately had sprung a leak, and four hands at the pumps interfered very much with their task. As Ready had prophesied, before night the gale blew, the sea

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rose again with the gale, and the leaking of the vessel increased so much, that all other labour was suspended for that at the pump. For two more days did the storm continue, during which time the crew were worn out with fatigue—they could pump no longer; the ship, as she rolled, proved that she had a great deal of water in her hold—when, melancholy as were their prospects already, a new disaster took place, which was attended with most serious results. Captain Osborn was on the forecastle giving some orders to the men, when the strap of the block which hoisted up the maintopgallant yard on the stump of the foremast gave way, the yard and sail came down on the deck, and struck him senseless. As long as Captain Osborn commanded them, the sailors had so high an opinion of his abilities as a seaman, and were so encouraged by his cheerful disposition, that they performed their work well and cheerfully; but now that he was, if not killed, at all events senseless and incapable of action, they no longer felt themselves under control. Mackintosh was too much disliked by the seamen to allow his words to have any weight with them. They were regardless of his injunctions or requests, and they now consulted among themselves.

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"The gale is broke, my men, and we shall have fine weather now," observed Ready, going up to the sailors on the forecastle. "The wind is going down fast."

"Yes," replied one of the men, "and the ship is going down fast, that's quite as certain."

"A good spell at the pumps would do us some good now," replied Ready. "What d'ye say, my lads?"

"A glass of grog or two would do us more," replied the seaman. "What d'ye say, my boys? I don't think that the captain would refuse us, poor fellow, if he could speak."

"What do you mean to do my lads?" inquired Mackintosh; "not get drunk, I hope?"

"Why not?" observed another of the men; "the ship must go down soon."

"Perhaps she may—I will not deny it," said Mackintosh; "but that is no reason why we should not be saved: now, if you get drunk, there is no chance of any one being saved, and my life is precious to me. I'm ready to join with you in anything you please, and you may decide what is to be done; but get drunk you shall not, if I can help it, that's certain."

"And how can you help it?" replied one of the seamen, surlily.

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"Because two resolute men can do a great deal —I may say three, for in this instance Ready will be of my side, and I can call to my assistance the cabin passenger—recollect the fire-arms are all in the cabin. But why should we quarrel?—say at once what you intend to do; and if you have not made up your minds, will you listen to what I propose?"

As Mackintosh's courage and determination were well known, the seamen again consulted together, and then asked him what he proposed.

"We have one good boat left, the new yawl on the booms: the others, as you know, are washed away, with the exception of the little boat astern, which is useless, as she is knocked almost to pieces. Now we cannot be very far from some of the islands, indeed I think we are among them now. Let us fit out the boat with every thing which we require, go about our work steadily and quietly, drink as much grog now as will not hurt us, and take a good provision of it with us. The boat is complete with her masts, sails, and oars; and it's very hard if we do not save ourselves somewhere. Ready, do I give good advice or not?"

"You give very good advice, Mackintosh—only what is to become of the cabin passengers, the

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women, and children? and are you going to leave poor Captain Osborn, who lays there abaft, breathless and insensible? or what do you mean to do?"

"We won't leave the captain," said one of the seamen.

"No—no!" exclaimed the others.

"And the passengers?"

"Very sorry for them," replied the former spokesman; "but we shall have enough to do to save our own lives; the boat is not over large."

"Well, my lads, I agree with you," said Mackintosh. "Charity begins at home. What do you say, then?—shall it be so?"

"Yes," replied the seamen, unanimously; and Ready knew that it was in vain to expostulate. They now set about preparing the boat and providing for their wants. Biscuits, salt pork, two or three small casks of water, and a barrel of rum were collected at the gangway; Mackintosh brought up his quadrant and a compass, some muskets, powder and shot; the carpenter, with the assistance of another man, cut away the ship's bulwarks down to the gunnel, so as to enable them to launch the boat overboard, for they could not of course hoist her out now that the masts were gone. In an hour every thing was prepared. A long rope was

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made fast to the boat, which was brought to the gunnel ready for launching overboard, and then the ship's broadside was brought to the wind. Ready had taken no part in their labour; he had once or twice sounded the well, to ascertain if the water gained upon the ship, and then sat down by the side of Captain Osborn, who still remained insensible from the blow which he had received on his head. As the ship was brought to the wind, Mr. Seagrave came on deck and looked around him.

He perceived the boat ready for launching, the provisions and water at the gangway, the ship brought to the wind, and rolling slowly to the heave of the sea; at last he saw Ready sitting down by Captain Osborn, who was apparently dead. "What is all this, Ready?" inquired Mr. Seagrave. "Are they going to leave the ship? have they killed Captain Osborn?"

"No, sir—not quite so bad as that. Poor Captain Osborn was struck down by the fall of the yard, and has been insensible ever since; but, as to the other matter, I fear that is decided; you see they are launching the boat."

"But my poor wife, she will never be able to go—she cannot move—she is so ill!"

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LAUNCHING THE BOAT.

"I'm afraid, Mr. Seagrave, that they have no idea of taking either you, or your wife or your children, with them."

"What! leave us here to perish? Merciful Heaven! how cruel—how barbarous!"

'It is not kind, Mr. Seagrave; but still you see it is the law of nature. When it is a question of life, it is every one for himself, for life is sweet: they are not more unkind than they would be to each other, if there were too many for the boat to

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hold. I've seen all this before in my time," replied Ready, gravely.

"My wife! my children!" cried Mr. Seagrave, covering his face with his hands. "But I will speak to them," continued he after a pause; "surely they will listen to the dictates of humanity; at all events, Mr. Mackintosh will have some power over them. Don't you think so, Ready?"

"Well, Mr. Seagrave, if I must speak, I confess to you that there is not a harder heart among them than that of Mr. Mackintosh, and it's useless speaking to him or any one of them; and you must not be too severe upon them neither: the boat is small, and could not hold more people with the provisions which they take with them—that is the fact. If they were to take you and your family into the boat, it might be the cause of all perishing together; if I thought otherwise, I would try what I could do to persuade them, but it is useless."

"What must be done then, Ready?"

"We must put our trust in a merciful God, Mr. Seagrave, who will dispose of us as he thinks fit."

"*We* must. What! do not you go with them?"

"No, Mr. Seagrave. I have been thinking about

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it this last hour, and I have made up my mind to remain with you. They intend to take poor Captain Osborn with them, and give him a chance, and have offered to take me; but I shall stay here."

"To perish?" replied Mr. Seagrave, with surprise.

"As God pleases, Mr. Seagrave. I am an old man, and it is of little consequence; and I hope that I am a prepared man as far as I have been able. I tell you, Mr. Seagrave, I think much more of your children than I do for myself. I care little whether I am taken away a year or two sooner, but I do not like to see blossoms cut off in early spring: I may be of use if I remain, for I've an old head upon my shoulders, and I could not leave you all to perish, when you *might* be saved if you only knew how to act. But here the seamen come — the boat is all ready, and they will now take poor Captain Osborn with them."

The sailors came aft, and lifted up the still insensible captain. As they were going away, one of them said. "Come, Ready, there's no time to lose."

"Never mind me, Williams; I shall stick to the ship," replied Ready. "I wish you success with all my heart, and, Mr. Mackintosh, I have but

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one promise to exact from you, and I hope you will not refuse me; which is, that if you are saved, you will then not forget those you leave here on board, and take measures for their being searched for among the islands."

"Nonsense, Ready! come into the boat," replied the first mate.

"I shall stay here, Mr. Mackintosh; and I only beg that you will promise me what I ask. Acquaint Mr. Seagrave's friends with what has happened, and where it is most likely we may be found, if it please God to save us: that is all that is necessary. Do you promise me that?"

"Yes I do, Ready, if you are determined to stay: but," continued he, going up to Ready, and whispering to him, "it is madness:—come away, man!"

"Good-bye, Mr. Mackintosh," replied Ready, extending his hand. "You will keep your promise?"

After much further expostulation on the part of Mackintosh and the seamen, to which Ready gave a deaf ear, the boat was pushed off, and they made sail to the north-east.

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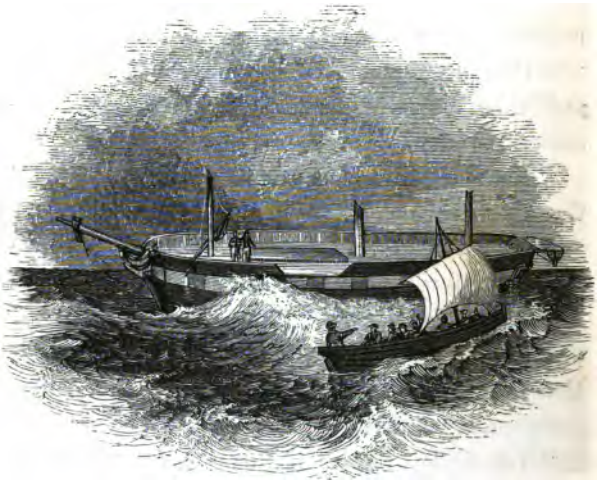

BOAT LEAVING SHIP.

CHAPTER VIII.

For some time after the boat had shoved off from the ship, old Ready remained with his arms folded, watching it in silence. Mr. Seagrave stood by him; his heart was too full for utterance, for he imagined that as the boat increased her distance from the vessel, so did every ray of hope depart, and that his wife and children, himself, and the old man who was by his side, were doomed

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to perish. His countenance was that of a man in utter despair. At last old Ready spoke.

"They think that they will be saved and that we must perish, Mr. Seagrave; they forget that there is a Power above, who will himself decide that point —a power compared to which the efforts of weak man are as nought."

"True," replied Mr. Seagrave, in a low voice; "but still what chance we can have on a sinking ship, with so many helpless creatures around us, I confess that I cannot imagine."

"We must do our best, and submit to His will," replied Ready, who then went aft, and shifted the helm, so as to put the ship again before the wind.

As the old man had foretold to the seamen before they quitted the vessel, the gale was now over, and the sea had gone down considerably. The ship, however, dragged but slowly through the water, and after a short time Ready lashed the wheel, and went forward. On his return to the quarter-deck, he found Mr. Seagrave had thrown himself down (apparently in a state of despair) upon the sail on which Captain Osborn had been laid after his accident.

"If you are praying, Mr. Seagrave, I am sorry

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to interrupt you; but if you are not, but are overcome with your situation, perhaps I may be able to give you some little hope."

"I have been praying," replied Mr. Seagrave, raising himself up, "and, since that, I have been trying to collect my thoughts, which I acknowledge to be very confused. The great pang will be to communicate to my wife our hopeless situation."

"If I thought our situation hopeless," replied Ready, "I would candidly say so; but there always is hope, even at the very worst,—and there always ought to be trust in that God without whose knowledge not a sparrow falls to the ground. But, Mr. Seagrave, I shall speak as a seaman, and tell you what our probabilities are. The ship is half-full of water, from her seams having opened by the straining in the gale, and the heavy blows which she received; but, now that the gale has abated, she has recovered herself very much. I have sounded the well, and find that she has not made many inches within the last two hours, and probably, as she closes her seams, will make less. If, therefore, it pleases God that the fine weather should continue, there is no fear of the vessel sinking under us for some little time; and as

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we are now amongst the islands, it is not impossible, nay it is very probable, that we may be able to run her ashore, and thus save our lives. I thought of all this when I refused to go in the boat, and I thought also, Mr. Seagrave, that if you were to have been deserted by me as well as by all the rest, you would have been unable yourself to take advantage of any chances which might turn up in your favour, and therefore I have remained, hoping, under God's providence, to be the means of assisting you and your family in this sore position. I think now it would be better that you should go down into the cabin, and with a cheerful face encourage poor Mrs. Seagrave with the change in the weather, and the hopes of arriving in some place of safety. If she does not know that the men have quitted the ship, do not tell her; say that the steward is with the other men, which will be true enough, and, if possible, leave her in the dark as to what has taken place; Master William can be trusted, and if you will send him here to me, I will talk to him. What do you think, Mr. Seagrave?"

"I hardly know what to think, Ready, or how sufficiently to thank you for your self-devotion, if I may so term it, in this exigency. That your

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advice is excellent, and that I shall follow it, you may be assured; and, should we be saved from the death which at present stares us in the face, my gratitude——"

"Do not speak of that, sir; I am an old man with few wants, and whose life is of little use now. All I wish to feel is, that I am trying to do my duty in that situation into which it has pleased God to call me. What can this world offer to one who has roughed it all his life, and who has neither kith nor kin that he knows of to care about his death? Thank you kindly, Mr. Seagrave, nevertheless: now I think you had better go down, and I will look about me a little." Mr. Seagrave pressed the hand of Ready, and went down without making any reply. He found that his wife had been asleep for the last hour, and was not yet awake. The children were also quiet in their beds. Juno and William were the only two who were sitting up.

William made a sign to his father that his mother was asleep, and then said in a whisper, "I did not like to leave the cabin while you were on deck, but the steward has not been here these two hours: he went to milk the goat for baby, and has not returned. We have had no breakfast, none of us."

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"William, go on deck," replied his father; "Ready wishes to speak to you—I will stay here."

William went on deck to Ready, who soon explained to him the position in which they were placed; he pointed out to him the necessity of his doing all he could to assist his father and him, and not to alarm his mother in her precarious state of health. William, who, as it may be expected, looked very grave, did, however, immediately enter into Ready's views, and proceeded to do his best. "Now Ready," said he, "you know the steward has left with the other men, and when my mother wakes she will ask why the children have had no breakfast. What can I do?"

"I don't know; but I think you can milk one of the goats if I show you how, while I go and get the other things ready; I can leave the deck, for you see the ship steers herself very nicely;—and Master William, I have sounded the well just before you came up, and I don't think she makes much water; and," continued he, looking round him, and up above, "we shall have fine weather and a smooth sea before night."

By the united exertions of Ready and William, the breakfast was prepared, while Mrs. Seagrave

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still continued in a sound sleep. The motion of the ship was now very little: she only rolled very slowly from one side to the other, for she was heavy with the water which had leaked into her; the sea and wind had gone down, and the sun shone brightly over their heads; the boat had been out of sight some time, and the ship did not go through the water faster than three miles an hour, for she had no other sail upon her than the maintop-gallant-sail hoisted up on the stump of the foremast. Ready, who had been some time down in the cabin, proposed to Mr. Seagrave that Juno and all the children should go on deck. "They cannot be expected to be quiet, sir; and, now that Madam is in such a sweet sleep, it would be a pity to wake her. After so much fatigue, she may sleep for hours, and the longer the better; for you know that (in a short time, I trust,) she will have to exert herself." Mr. Seagrave agreed to the good sense of this proposal, and went on deck with Juno and the children, leaving William in the cabin to watch his mother. Poor Juno was very much astonished when she came up the ladder and perceived the condition of the vessel and the absence of the men but Mr. Seagrave told her what had happened, and cautioned her against saying a word

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to Mrs. Seagrave. Juno promised that she would not; but the poor girl perceived the danger of their position, and, as she pressed little Albert to her bosom, a tear or two rolled down her cheeks—she was not thinking of herself, but of what would become of her little charge. Even Tommy and Caroline could not help asking where the masts and sails were, and what had become of Captain Osborn.

"Look there, sir," said Ready, pointing out some floating seaweed to Mr. Seagrave.

"I perceive it," said Mr. Seagrave; "but what then?"

"That by itself would not be quite proof," replied Ready, "but we sailors have other signs and tokens. Do you see those birds hovering over the waves?"

"I do."

"Well, sir, those birds never go far from land, that's all: and now, sir, I'll go down for my quadrant; for, although I cannot tell the longitude just now, at all events I can find out the latitude we are in, and then by looking at the chart shall be able to give some kind of guess whereabout we are, if we see land soon."

"It is nearly noon now," observed Ready, reading

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COMMON SEAGULLS.

off his quadrant; "the sun rises very slowly. What a happy thing a child is! Look, sir, at those little creatures playing about, and as merry now, and as unaware of danger, as if they were at home in their parlour. Although nothing pains me more when it does take place, I often think, sir, it is a great blessing for a child to be called away early; and that it is selfish in parents to repine."

"Perhaps it is," replied Mr. Seagrave, looking mournfully at his children.

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"It's twelve o'clock, sir. I'll just go down and work the latitude, and then I'll bring up the chart."

Mr. Seagrave remained on deck. He was soon in deep and solemn thought; nor was it to be wondered at; the ship a wreck and deserted — left alone on the wide water with his wife and helpless family, with but one to assist him: had that one deserted him as well as the rest, what would have been his position then? Utter helplessness! And now what had they to expect? Their greatest hopes were to gain some island, and, if they succeeded, perhaps a desert island, perhaps an island inhabited by savages—to be murdered, or to perish miserably of hunger and thirst. Or, allowing that they did find the means of subistence, what then? Were they to remain there for their lives, and die unknown and unheeded? It was not until some time after these reflections had passed through his mind, that Mr. Seagrave could recall himself to a sense of thankfulness to the Almighty for having hitherto preserved them, or could say with humility, "O Lord! thy will, not mine be done." But, having once succeeded in repressing his murmurs and his doubts of the goodness of Providence, he then felt that he had courage and faith to undergo every trial which might be imposed upon him.

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"Here is the chart, sir," said Ready, "and I have drawn a pencil line through our latitude: you perceive that it passes through this cluster of islands; and I think we must be among them, or very near. Now I must put something on for dinner, and then look sharp out for the land. Will you take a look round, Mr. Seagrave, especially ahead and on the bows?"

Ready went down to see what he could procure for dinner, as the seamen, when they left the ship, had collected almost all which came first to hand. He soon procured a piece of salt beef and some potatoes, which he put into the saucepan, and then returned on deck.

Mr. Seagrave was forward, looking over the bows, and Ready went there to him.

"Ready, I think I see something, but I can hardly tell what it is: it appears to be in the air, and yet it is not clouds. Look there, where I point my finger."

"You're right, sir," replied Ready; "there is something; it is not the land which you see, but it is the trees upon the land, which are refracted, as they call it, so as to appear, as you say, as if they were in the air. That is an island, sir, depend upon it; but I will go down and get my glass."

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"It is the land, Mr. Seagrave," said Ready, after examining it with his glass—"yes, it is so," continued he, musing; "I wish that we had seen it earlier; and yet we must be thankful."

"Why so, Ready?"

"Only, sir, as the ship forges so slowly through the water, I fear that we shall not reach it before dark, and I should have wished to have had daylight to have laid her nicely on it."

"There is very little wind now."

"Well, let us hope that there will be more," replied Ready; "if not, we must do our best;—but I must now go to the helm, for we must steer right for the island; it would not do to pass it, for, Mr. Seagrave, although the ship does not leak so much as she did, yet I must now tell you that I do not think that she could be kept more than twenty-four hours above water. I thought otherwise this morning when I sounded the well; but when I went down in the hold for the beef, I then perceived that we were in more danger than I had any idea of; however, there is the land, and every chance of escape; so let us thank the Lord for all his mercies."

"Amen!" replied Mr. Seagrave.

Ready went to the helm and steered a course for

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the land, which was not so far distant as he had imagined, for the island was very low: by degrees the wind freshened up, and they went faster through the water; and now, the trees, which had appeared as if in the air, joined on to the land, and they could make out that it was a low coral island covered with groves of cocoa-nuts. Occasionally Ready gave the helm up to Mr. Seagrave, and went forward to examine. When they were within three or four miles of it, Ready came back from the forecastle, and said, "I think I see my way pretty clear, sir: you see we are to the windward of the island, and there is always deep water to the windward of these sort of isles, and reefs and shoals to leeward; we must, therefore, find some little cleft in the coral rock to dock her in, as it were, or she may fall back into deep water after she has taken the ground, for sometimes these islands run up like a wall, with forty or fifty fathom of water close to the weather sides of them; but I do see a spot where I think she may be put on shore with safety. You see those three cocoa-nut trees close together on the beach? Now, sir, I cannot well see them as I steer, so do you go forward, and if I am to steer more to the right, put out your right hand, and if to the left, the same with your left; and,

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when the ship's head is as it ought to be, then drop the hand which you have raised."

"I perfectly understand you, Ready," replied Mr. Seagrave, who then went forward and directed the steering of the vessel as they neared the island. When they were within half a mile of it, the colour of the water changed, very much to the satisfaction of Ready, who knew that the weather side of the island would not be so steep as was usually the case; still, it was an agitating moment as they ran on to the beach. They were now within a cable's length, and still the ship did not ground; a little nearer, and there was a grating at her bottom—it was the breaking off of the coral-trees, which grew below like forests under water—again she grated, and more harshly, then struck; and then again; at last she struck violently, as the swell lifted her farther on, and then remained fast and quiet. Ready let go the helm to ascertain the position of the ship. He looked over the stern and around the ship, and found that she was firmly fixed, fore and aft, upon a bed of coral rocks.

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SHIP ON THE ROCKS.

CHAPTER IX.

"ALL's well so far, sir," said Ready to Mr. Seagrave; "and now let us return thanks to Heaven."

Ready kneeled down on the deck, took off his hat, and remained a short time in prayer. Mr. Seagrave did the same: the children at first looked on, and wondered, and then knelt down by the side of them, following the example of Juno.

As they rose, William came up and said,—"Father, my mother has sent me to you; she was

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awakened by the noise under the ship's bottom, and is frightened—will you go down to her?"

"Yes, my child, directly," said Mr. Seagrave.

"What is the matter, my dear—and where have you all been?" exclaimed Mrs. Seagrave, when her husband went down below. "I have been so frightened—I was in such a sound sleep, and I was awakened with such a dreadful noise."

"Be composed, my dear," replied Mr. Seagrave: "we have been in great danger, and are now, I trust, in safety. Tell me, are you not better for your long sleep?"

"Yes, much better—much stronger; but do tell me what has happened."

"Much took place, dearest, before you went to sleep, which was concealed from you; but now, as I expect we shall all go on shore in a short time——"

"Go on shore, my dear?"

"Yes, on shore. Now be calm, and hear what has happened, and how much we have reason to be grateful to Heaven."

Mr. Seagrave then entered into a detail of all that had passed. Mrs. Seagrave heard him without reply; and when he had finished, she threw herself in his arms, and wept bitterly.

Mr. Seagrave remained with his wife, using all his

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efforts to console her, until Juno re-appeared with the children, for it was now getting late; and then Mr. Seagrave returned on deck to consult with Ready.

"Well, sir," said Ready, when Mr. Seagrave went up to him, "I have been looking well about me, and I think that we have great reason to be thankful. The ship is fast enough, and will not move until some violent gales come on and break her up; but of that there is no fear at present: the little wind that there is, is going down, and we shall have a calm before morning."

"I grant that there is no immediate danger, Ready; but how are we to get on shore?—and when on shore, how are we to exist?"

"I have thought of that too, sir, and I must have your assistance, and even that of Master William, to get the little boat on board to repair her: her bottom is stove in, it is true, but I am carpenter enough for that, and with some well-tarred canvass, I can make her sufficiently water-tight to land us all in safety, until I have an opportunity of putting her in better order. We must set to at daylight."

"And when we get on shore?"

"Why, Mr. Seagrave, where there are cocoa-nut trees in such plenty as there are on that island,

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there is no fear of starvation, even if we had not the ship's provisions. I expect a little difficulty with regard to water, for the island is low—very low, and small; but we cannot expect to find every thing exactly as we wish."

"I am thankful to the Almighty for our preservation, Ready; but still there are feelings which I cannot get over. Here we are cast away upon a desolate island, which perhaps no ship may ever come near, so that there is little chance of our being taken off. Here we may live and die—here my children may grow up,—yes, grow old, after they have buried you, their father, and their mother, and follow us to the same tomb. All their prospects in life, all mine—all blasted—all my hopes overthrown—it is a melancholy and cruel fate, Ready, and that you must acknowledge."

"Mr. Seagrave, as an old man compared to you, I may venture to say that you are ungrateful to Heaven to give way to these repinings. What is said in the book of Job? 'Shall we receive good of the Lord, and shall we not receive evil?' Besides, who knows whether good may not proceed from what appears evil? You talk of your children and of their prospects, Mr. Seagrave, but can you tell what might have happened if you had arrived at

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Sydney, and had followed up your worldly concerns? Most children promise fair; but, when they arrive at manhood, do they always prove equal to the expectations of their parents? Who knows but what this visitation upon them may have preserved them from wickedness, or from a violent death in the midst of their wickedness—from being cut off in their prime—from disgracing you and their good mother? I beg your pardon, Mr. Seagrave, I hope I have not offended you; but indeed, sir, I felt that it was my duty to speak as I have done."

"You have reproved me very justly, Ready; and I thank you for it," replied Mr. Seagrave; "I will repine no more, but make the best of it."

"And trust in God, sir, who, if he thinks fit, will restore you once more to your friends, and increase tenfold your flocks and herds."

"That quotation becomes very apt, Ready," replied Mr. Seagrave, smiling, "considering that all my prospects are in flocks and herds upon my land in New South Wales. I must put myself under your orders; for, in our present position, you are my superior—knowledge is power. Can we do anything to-night?"

"I can do a little, Mr. Seagrave; but you can-

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not assist me till to-morrow morning, except indeed to help me to drag these two spars aft; and then I can rig a pair of sheers, and have them all ready for hoisting up to-morrow morning to get the boat in. You see, with so little strength on board, and no masts, we shall be obliged to contrive."

Mr. Seagrave assisted Ready in getting the two spars aft, and laid on the spot which was required. "There now, Mr. Seagrave, you may go down below. Master William had better let loose the two dogs, and give them a little victuals, for we have quite forgot them, poor things. I shall keep watch, to-night, for I have plenty to do, and plenty to think of; so, good night, sir."

Mr. Seagrave wished Ready good night, and went below. Ready remained on deck, lashing the heads of the spars, and fixing his tackles ready for the morrow. When all was done, he sat down upon one of the hencoops aft, and remained in deep thought. At last, tired with watching and exertion, the old man fell asleep. He was awakened at daylight by the dogs, who had been set at liberty, and who, after walking about the ship and finding nobody, had then gone to sleep at the cabin door. At daybreak they had roused up,

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and going on deck had found old Ready asleep on the hencoop, and were licking his face in their joy at having discovered him. "Ay," said the old man, as he got off the hencoop, "you'll all three be useful, if I mistake not, by and by. Down Vixen, down—poor creature, you've lost a good master, I'm afraid."

"Stop—now let me see," said Ready, talking to himself; "first—but I'll get the logboard and a bit of chalk, and write them down, for my memory is not quite so good as it was."

Ready placed the logboard on the hencoop, and then wrote on it with the chalk:—"Three dogs, two goats, and Billy, the kid (I think there's five pigs); fowls (quite enough); three or four pigeons (I'm sure); the cow (she has lain down and won't get up again, I'm afraid, so we must kill her); and there's the Merino ram and sheep belonging to Mr. Seagrave—plenty of live stock. Now what's the first things we must get on shore after we are all landed?—a spar and top-gallant-sail for a tent, a coil or two of rope, a mattress or two for Madam and the children, two axes, hammer and nails, something to eat—yes, and something to cut it with. There, that will do for the present," said old Ready, getting up. "Now I'll just light the fire, get the

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water on, and while I think of it, boil two or three pieces of beef and pork to go on shore with them; and then I'll call up Mr. Seagrave, for I reckon it will be a hard day's work: and may we have God's blessing on it!"

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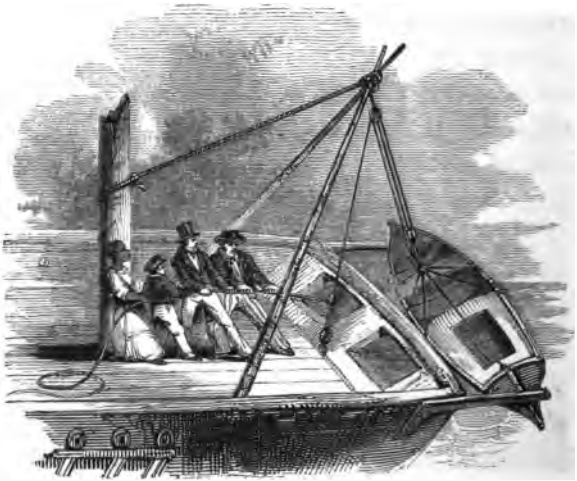

GETTING THE BOAT ON BOARD.

CHAPTER X.

As soon as Ready had executed his intentions, and had fed the animals, he went to the cabin, and called Mr. Seagrave and William. With their assistance the sheers were raised, and secured in their place; the boat was then hooked on, but, as one person was required to bear it clear of the davits and taffrail, they could not hoist it in.

"Master William, will you run down to Juno, and tell her to come on deck to assist us—we

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must all work now? Madam will hold the baby for a few minutes."

William soon returned with Juno, who was a strong girl and, with her assistance, they succeeded in getting the boat in, and then they sent Juno down again into the cabin.

The boat was turned over, and Ready commenced his work; while Mr. Seagrave, at his request, put the pitch-pot on the galley fire, all ready for pitching the canvass when it was nailed on. It was not till dinner-time that Ready, who had worked hard, could patch up the boat; he then payed the canvass and the seams which he had caulked with pitch both inside and out.

"I think we shall do now, sir," said Ready; "we'll drag her to the gangway and launch her. It's fortunate for us that they did clear away the gunnel, as we shall have no trouble."

A rope was made fast to the boat, to hold her to the ship: she was then launched over the gunnel by the united exertions of Mr. Seagrave and Ready, and to their great satisfaction she appeared to leak very little.

"Now, sir," said Ready, "what shall we do

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first—take some things on shore, or some of the children ?"

"What do you say, Ready ?"

"Why then, sir, with submission to you, I think, as the water is as smooth as glass, and we can land anywhere (for which we ought to be most thankful, having women and infants to take on shore), that you and I had better go first to reconnoitre,—it is not two hundred yards to the beach, and we shall lose but little time."

"Very well, Ready; I will first run down and tell my wife."

"And, in the meanwhile, I'll put the sail into the boat, and one or two other things; it will be so much time saved."

"Ready put the sail in, an axe, a musket, and some cord. Mr. Seagrave came up again; they both got into the boat, and pulled on shore.

When they landed, they found that they could see nothing of the interior of the island, the cocoa-nut groves were so thick; but to their right they perceived, at about a quarter of a mile off, a small sandy cove, with brushwood growing in front of the cocoa-nut trees.

"That," said Ready, pointing to it, "must be our location, as the Americans call it. Let us get

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FIRST LANDING ON THE ISLAND.

into the boat again, Mr. Seagrave, and pull to it; it is but a little way to pull, but a long way to carry the things in the boat."

In a few minutes they arrived at the cove; the water was shallow, and as clear as crystal. Beneath the boat's bottom they could see beautiful shells, and the fish darting about in every direction.

The sand extended about forty yards from the

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water, and then commenced the brushwood, which ran back about forty yards further, intermingled with single cocoa-nut trees, until it joined the cocoa-nut grove. They pulled the boat in, and landed.

"What a lovely spot this is!" exclaimed Mr. Seagrave; "and perhaps mortal man has never yet visited it till now: these cocoa-nuts have borne their fruit year after year, have died, and others have sprung up in their stead; and here has this spot remained, perhaps for centuries, all ready for man to live in, and to enjoy, whenever he should come to it."

"Providence is bountiful, Mr. Seagrave," replied Ready, "and supplies our wants when we least expect it. If you please, we will walk a little way into the wood: take the gun as a precaution, sir; not that there appears to be much occasion for it—there is seldom anything wild on these small islands, except a pig or two has been put on shore by considerate Christians. I once sailed with a captain on these seas, and he never landed on a desolate island without putting a couple of pigs or something on shore to breed, in case anybody should hereafter be shipwrecked; it was a kind thought."

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"It was, Ready. Well, now that we are in the grove, what do you think?"

"I was looking for a place to fix a tent up for the present, sir, and I think that on that little rise would be a very good place till we can look about us and do better; but we have no time now, sir, for we have plenty of trips to make before night-fall. If you please, we'll haul the sail and other articles on to the beach, and then return on board."

As they were pulling the boat back, Ready said, "I've been thinking about what is best, Mr. Seagrave. Would Mrs. Seagrave mind your leaving her?—if not, I should say we should have Juno and Master William on shore first, as they can be of use."

"I do not think that she will mind being left on board with William and the children, provided that I return for her when she is to come on shore herself with the baby."

"Well then, let Master William remain on board if you please, sir. I'll land you and Juno, Master Tommy, and the dogs, this time, for they will be a protection in case of accidents. You and Juno can be doing something while I return by myself for the other articles we shall require."

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As soon as they arrived on board, Mr. Seagrave went down to cheer his wife with the account of what they had seen, and he obtained her consent to the arrangement made by Ready. While he was down below, Ready had cast off the lashings of the two spars which had formed the sheers, and dragging them forward, had launched them over the gunnel, with lines fast to them, ready for towing on shore. In a few minutes Juno and Tommy made their appearance on deck; Ready put some tools into the boat, and a couple of shovels, which he brought up when he went for the dogs, and once more they landed at the sandy cove. Tommy stared about him a great deal, but did not speak, until he saw the shells lying on the beach, when he screamed with delight, and began to pick them up as fast as he could; the dogs barked and galloped about, overjoyed at being once more on shore; and Juno smiled as she looked around her, saying to Ready, "What a nice place!"

"Now, Mr. Seagrave, I'll remain on shore with you a little. First, we'll load the musket in case of need, and then you can put it out of the way of Master Tommy, who fingers everything, I observe. We will take up the sail between us. Juno,

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you can carry the tools; and then we can come back again for the spars, and the rope, and the other things. Come, Master Tommy, you can carry a shovel, at all events, and that will make you of some use. We must all work now."

Having taken all these things to the little knoll which Ready had pointed out before, they returned for the spars; and in two trips they had carried everything there, Tommy with the second shovel on his shoulder, and very proud to be employed.

"Here are two trees which will answer our purpose pretty well." said Ready, "as they are far enough apart: we must lash the spars up to them, and then throw the sail over, and bring it down to the ground at both ends; that will be a beginning, at all events; and I will bring some more canvass on shore, to set up the other tent between these other trees, and also to shut up the two ends of both of them; then we shall have a shelter for Madam, and Juno, and the younger children, and another for Master William, Tommy, and ourselves. Now, sir, I'll just help you to lash the spars, and then I'll leave you to finish while I go on board again."

"But how can we reach so high, Ready?"

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"Why, sir, we can manage that by first lashing a spar as high as we can conveniently reach, and then standing on that while we lash the other in its proper place. I shall bring another spar on shore, that we may do the same when we set up the other tent."

Having by this plan succeeded in lashing the spar high enough, and throwing the sail over the spar, Ready and Mr. Seagrave spread it out, and found that it made a very good-sized tent.

"Now, sir, I'll return on board; in the mean time if you can cut pegs from the brushwood to fasten the sail down to the ground, and then with the shovel cover the bottom of it with sand to keep it down, it will be close enough when it is all finished. There's my knife, sir, if you hav'n't got one."

"I shall do very well," replied Mr. Seagrave; "Juno can help me to pull the canvass out tight when I am ready."

"Yes; and in the mean time, Juno, take a shovel and level the inside of the tent nice and smooth, and throw out all those old cocoa-nut leaves, and look if you see any vermin lurking among them. Master Tommy, you must not run away; and you must not touch the axes, they will cut you if you

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do. It may be as well to say, Mr. Seagrave, that should anything happen, and you require my assistance, you had better fire off the gun, and I will come on shore to you immediately. But that's not very likely," continued Ready, who then walked down to the beach, and stepping into the boat, pulled on board of the ship.

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PUTTING UP TENT.

CHAPTER XI.

When Ready returned on board, he first went down into the cabin to acquaint Mrs. Seagrave and William with what they had done. Mrs. Seagrave naturally felt anxious about her husband being on shore alone, and Ready informed her that they had agreed that, if anything should occur, Mr. Seagrave would fire the musket. He then went down into the sail-room to get some canvass, a new top-gallant sail which was there, and a palm and

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needles with twine. Scarcely had he got them out, and at the foot of the ladder, when the report of the musket was heard, and Mrs. Seagrave rushed out of the cabin in the greatest alarm; Ready seized another musket, jumped into the boat, and pulled on shore as fast as he could. On his arrival, quite out of breath,—for as he pulled on shore he had his back towards it, and could see nothing, he found Mr. Seagrave and Juno busy with the tent, and Master Tommy sitting on the ground crying very lustily. It appeared that, while Mr. Seagrave and Juno were employed, Master Tommy had crept away to where the musket was placed up on end against a cocoa-nut tree, and after pulling it about some little while, had touched the trigger. The musket went off; and, as the muzzle was pointed upwards, the charge had brought down two large cocoa-nuts, which fell close to where Tommy was under the tree, and, had they hit him, would certainly have killed him. Mr. Seagrave, who was aware what an alarm this would produce on board the vessel, had been scolding him soundly, and now Master Tommy was crying, to prove how very penitent he was.

"I had better return on board immediately, sir, and tell Mrs. Seagrave," said Ready.

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"Do, pray, my good fellow," replied Mr. Seagrave.

Ready then returned to the ship, and explained matters, and then recommenced his labour.

Having put into the boat the sailmaker's bag with palm and needles, two mattresses, and blankets from the captain's state room, the saucepan with the beef and pork, and a spar which he towed astern, Ready found that he had as much as he could carry; but, as there was nobody but himself in it, he came on shore very well. Having, with the assistance of Mr. Seagrave and Juno, got all the things up to the knoll, Ready lashed the spar up for the second tent, and then leaving them to fix it up like the other, he returned again on board. Juno had cleaned the tent out very nicely, and said that she had not found any animals or insects among the leaves. Before he went, Ready gave Tommy a stick, and told him to watch the beef and pork, and not allow the dogs to eat it all up, and Tommy, who was on his good behaviour, stood sentry over it as grave as a judge. Ready made two other trips to the ship, bringing with him more bedding, a bag of ship's biscuits, another of potatoes, plates, knives and forks, spoons, fryingpans and other cooking utensils, and a

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variety of other articles. He then showed Juno how to fill up the ends of the first tent with the canvass and sails he had brought on shore, so as to enclose it all round; Juno took the needle and twine, and worked very well. Ready, satisfied that she would be able to get on without them, now said: "Mr. Seagrave, we have but two hours more daylight, and it is right that Mrs. Seagrave should come on shore now; so, if you please, we'll go off and fetch her and the children. I think we shall be able to do very well for the first night; and if it pleases God to give us fine weather, we may do a great deal more to-morrow—indeed as long as the fine weather lasts, we must work hard in getting things on shore, for one good gale would, in all probability, beat the vessel to pieces. I stowed the hold myself, and know where most of the things are to be found, but I fear it will not be possible to get out many articles which would be useful."

As soon as they arrived on board, Mr. Seagrave went down to his wife to propose her going on shore. She was much agitated, and very weak from her illness, but she behaved courageously notwithstanding, and, supported by her husband, she gained the deck, William following with the baby, and his little sister Caroline carried by

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Ready. With some difficulty they were all at last placed in the boat and shoved off; but Mrs. Seagrave was so ill, that her husband was obliged to support her in his arms, and William took an oar. They landed very safely, and carried Mrs. Seagrave up to the tent, and laid her down on one of the mattresses. She asked for a little water.

"And I have forgotten to bring any with me; well, I am a stupid old man; but I'll go on board directly," said Ready; "to think that I should be so busy in bringing other things on shore and forget the greatest necessary in life! The fact is, I intended to look for it on the island as soon as I could, as it would save a great deal of trouble."

Ready returned on board as fast as he could, and brought on shore two kegs of fresh water, which he and William rolled up to the tent.

Juno had completely finished her task, and Mrs. Seagrave having drunk some water, declared that she was much better.

"I shall not return on board any more to-night," said Ready, "I feel tired—very tired indeed."

"You must be, my good man," replied Mr. Seagrave; "you have been up many nights, and have worked very hard all day. Do not think of doing any more."

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"And I hav'n't touched food this day, or even quenched my thirst," replied Ready, sitting down.

"You are ill, are you not, Ready?" said William.

"A little faint, Master William; I'm not so young as I was. Could you give me a little water?"

"Stop, William, I will," said Mr. Seagrave, taking up a tin can which had been filled for his wife: "here, Ready, drink this."

"I shall be better soon, sir; I'll just lie down a little, and then I'll have a biscuit and a little meat."

Poor old Ready was indeed quite tired out; but he ate something, and felt much revived. Juno was very busy; she had given the children some of the salt meat and biscuit to eat. The baby, and Tommy, and Caroline had been put to bed, and the second tent was nearly ready.

"It will do very well for to-night, Juno," said Mr. Seagrave; "we have done work enough for this day."

"Yes, sir," replied Ready, "and I think we ought to thank God for his mercies to us before we go to sleep. Have we not much to thank Him for? Had the weather been bad, and the water rough,

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should we have been so comfortably on shore as we are now? Has it not been a mercy?"

"You remind me of my duty, Ready; let us thank Him for his goodness, and pray to Him for his protection before we go to sleep."

"Do, my dear husband," said Mrs. Seagrave, from her tent; "I can hear you and join with you."

Mr. Seagrave then offered up a prayer of thankfulness; and they all retired to rest.

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BOAT.

CHAPTER XII.

Mr. Seagrave was the first who awoke and rose from his bed on the ensuing morning. He stepped out of the tent, and looked around him. The sky was clear and brilliant. A light breeze ruffled o'er the surface of the water, and the tiny waves rippled one after another, upon the white sand of the cove. To the left of the cove the land rose, forming small hills, behind which appeared the continuation of the cocoa-nut groves. To the right, a low ridge

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of coral rocks rose almost as a wall from the sea, and joined the herbage and brushwood at about a hundred paces, while the wreck of the Pacific, lying like some huge stranded monster, formed the prominent feature in the landscape. The sun was powerful where its beams could penetrate; but where Mr. Seagrave stood, the cocoa-nuts waved their feathering leaves to the wind, and offered an impervious shade. A feeling of the extreme beauty of the scene, subdued by the melancholy created by the sight of the wrecked vessel, pervaded the mind of Mr. Seagrave as he meditated over it.

"Yes," thought he, "if, tired with the world and its anxieties, I had sought an abode of peace and beauty, it would have been on a spot like this. How lovely is the scene!—what calm—what content—what a sweet sadness does it create! How mercifully have we been preserved when all hope appeared to be gone; and how bountifully have we been provided for, now that we have been saved,—and yet I have dared to repine, when I ought to be full of gratitude! May God forgive me! Wife, children, all safe; nothing to regret but a few worldly goods and a seclusion from the world for a time—yes, but for how long a time!—What! rebellious still!—for the time that it shall please

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God in his wisdom to ordain." Mr. Seagrave turned back to his tent. William, Tommy, and old Ready still remained fast asleep. "Excellent old man," thought Mr. Seagrave, "if ever we return to the busy scenes of life, your kindness and your Christian feelings shall have their reward, as far as it is in my power to repay you. What a heart of oak is hid under that rugged bark!—Had it not been for his devotion—his utter sacrifice of self—where might I and all those dear helpless creatures have been now? Sleep on, good old man, and may Heaven bless you!"

The dogs, who had crept into the tent and laid themselves down upon the mattresses by the side of William and Tommy, now fawned upon Mr. Seagrave. William woke up with their whining, and having received a caution from his father not to wake old Ready, he dressed himself and came out.

"Had I not better call Juno, father?" said William; "I think I can without waking mamma, if she is asleep."

"Then do, if you can, my boy; and I will see what cooking utensils Ready has brought on shore."

William soon returned to his father, stating that his mother was in a sound sleep, and that Juno had got up without waking her or the two children.

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"Well, we'll see if we cannot get some breakfast ready for them, William. Those dry cocoa-nut leaves will make an excellent fire."

"But, father, how are we to light the fire? we have no tinder-box or matches."

"No; but there are other ways, William, although, in most of them, tinder is necessary. The savages can produce fire by rubbing a soft piece of wood against a hard one. I'm afraid that we should be a long while doing that, but we have gunpowder, and can make tinder by wetting it and rubbing it on a rag or piece of paper, or indeed a piece of soft wood; and we have two ways of igniting gunpowder—one is by a flint and steel, and the other by collecting the sun's rays into one focus by a magnifying glass."

"We have no magnifying glass."

"No; but we can obtain one out of a telescope when we go on board again; at present we have no other means than with the musket."

"But, father, when we have lighted the fire, what have we to cook? we have no tea or coffee."

"No, I do not think we have," replied Mr. Seagrave.

"But we have potatoes, father."

"Yes, William, but don't you think it would

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be better if we made our breakfast off the cold beef and pork and ship's biscuits for once, and not use the potatoes? We may want them all to plant, you know; but why should we not go on board of the ship ourselves? You can pull an oar pretty well, and we must all learn to work now, and not leave everything for poor old Ready to do. It will be some time before we are as handy as that old man, or as prepared to meet every difficulty. Come, William."

Mr. Seagrave then went down to the cove: the little boat was lying on the beach, just lifted by the rippling waves; they pushed her off, and got into her. "I know where the steward kept the tea and coffee, father," said William, as they pulled on board; "Mamma would like some for breakfast I'm sure, and I'll milk the goats for baby."

Although they were neither of them very handy at the oar, they were soon alongside of the ship; and having made the boat fast, they climbed on board.

William first went down to the cabin for the tea and coffee, and then left his father to collect other things while he went to milk the goats, which he did in a tin pan. He then poured the milk into a bottle, which he had washed out, that it might not be spilt, and went back to his father.

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"I have filled these two baskets full of a great many things, William, which will be very acceptable to your mamma. What else shall we take?"

"Let us take the telescope, at all events, father; and let us take a whole quantity of clothes—they will please mamma: the clean ones are all in the drawers—we can bring them up in a sheet; and then, father, let us bring some of the books on shore; and I'm sure mamma will long for her Bible and Prayer-book;—here they are."

"You are a good boy, William," replied Mr. Seagrave, "I will now take those things up to the boat, and then return for the rest."

In a short time everything was put into the boat, and they pulled on shore again. They found Juno, who had been washing herself, waiting for them at the cove, to assist to take up the things.

"Well, Juno, how do you find yourself this morning?"

"Quite well, massa," said Juno: and then pointing to the clear water, she said, "Plenty fish here."

"Yes, if we only had lines," replied Mr. Seagrave. "I think Ready has both hooks and lines somewhere. Come, Juno, take up this bundle of linen to your tent: we can manage all the rest."

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"Then, Juno, you may as well take this bottle of milk, which I got for little Albert's breakfast."

"Tankee, Massa William; dat very good of you."

"And you must be quick, Juno; for there's Tommy on his legs, and running about in his shirt."

When they arrived at the tent they found that every one was awake except old Ready, who appeared still to sleep very sound. Mrs. Seagrave had passed a very good night, and felt herself much refreshed. William made some touch-paper, which he lighted with one of the glasses from the telescope, and they soon had a good fire. Mr. Seagrave went to the beach, and procured three large stones to rest the saucepan on; and in half an hour the water was boiling and the tea made.

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JUNO DIPPING THE CHILDREN.

CHAPTER XIII.

JUNO had taken the children down to the cove, and, walking out into the water up to her knees, had dipped them in all over, as the shortest way of washing them, and had then dressed them and left them with their mother, while she assisted William to get the cups and saucers and plates for breakfast. Everything was laid out nice and tidy between the two tents, and then William proposed that he should awaken old Ready.

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"Yes, my boy, you may as well now—he will want his breakfast; and, besides, he would not like to be away when we all meet to return thanks to God before we sit down to our meal."

William went and pushed Ready on the shoulder. "Ready, have you had sleep enough?" said William, as the old man sat up.

"Yes, Master William. I have had a good nap, I expect; and now I will get up, and see what I can get for breakfast for you all."

"Do," replied William, laughing.

Ready was soon dressed, for he had only taken off his jacket when he laid down. He put it on, and came out of the tent; when, to his astonishment, he found the whole party (Mrs. Seagrave having come out with the children) standing round the breakfast, which was spread on the ground.

"Good morning, Ready," said Mrs. Seagrave, extending her hand. Mr. Seagrave also shook hands with him.

"You have had a good long sleep, Ready," said Mr. Seagrave, "and I would not waken you after your fatigue of yesterday."

"I thank you kindly, sir; and I am glad to see that Madam is so well: and I am not sorry to see

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that you can do so well without me," continued Ready, smiling.

"Indeed, but we cannot, I'm afraid," replied Mrs. Seagrave; "had it not been for you and your kindness, where should we have been now?"

"We can get a breakfast ready without you," said Mr. Seagrave; "but without you, my good fellow, I think we never should have required another breakfast by this time; but we will tell Ready all we have done while we eat our breakfast: now, my dear, if you please." Mrs. Seagrave then read a chapter from the Bible, and afterwards they all knelt down while Mr. Seagrave offered up a prayer.

While they were at breakfast, William told Ready how they had gone on board, and what they had brought on shore, and he also mentioned how Juno had dipped all the children in the sea.

"But Juno must not do that again," replied Ready, "until I have made all safe; you know that there are plenty of sharks about these islands, and it is very dangerous to go into the water."

"Oh, Mr. Seagrave what an escape they have had!" cried Mrs. Seagrave, shuddering.

"It's very true," continued Ready; "but they

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don't keep so much to the windward of the islands where we are at present; but still that smooth cove is a very likely place for them to come into; so it's just as well not to go in again, Juno, until I have time to make a place for you to bathe in in safety; but we have plenty to do before we think of that, and as soon as we can get as much as we want from the ship, we must decide whether we shall stay here or not."

"Stay here or not, Ready!—what do you mean?"

"Why, we have not yet found any water, and that is the first necessary of life—if there is no water on this side of the island, we must pitch our tents somewhere else."

"That's very true," replied Mr. Seagrave; "I wish we could find time to explore a little."

"So we can, sir; but we must not lose this fine weather. It may be rough to-morrow, and then we shall not be able to get anything from the ship. We had better go now. You, sir, William, and me. You and William can remain on board to collect the things, and I will land them on the beach for Juno to bring up."

The whole day was spent in landing every variety of article which they thought could be

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useful. All the small sails, cordage, twine, canvass, small casks, saws, chisels, and large nails, and elm and oak plank, were brought on shore before dinner. After they had taken a hearty dinner, they went to work again. The cabin tables and chairs, all their clothes, some boxes of candles, two bags of coffee, two of rice, two more of biscuits, several pieces of beef and pork, and bags of flour, for they could not manage to get a whole cask out, some more water, the grindstone, and Mrs. Seagrave's medicine-chest were then landed. When Ready came off again, he said, "Our poor boat is getting very leaky, and will not take much more on shore without being repaired; and Juno has not been able to get half the things up—they are too heavy for one person—I think we shall do pretty well now, Mr. Seagrave; and we had better, before it is dark, get all the animals on shore. I don't much like to trust them to swim on shore, but they are awkward things in a boat. We'll try a pig, at all events; and while I get one up, do you and Master William tie the legs of the fowls, and put them into the boat: as for the cow, she cannot be brought on shore, she is still lying down, and, I expect, won't get up again any more; it is the way with those animals; however, I have given her

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plenty of hay, and, if she don't rise, why I will kill her, and we can salt her down."

Ready went down below, and the squealing of the pig was soon heard; he came on deck with it hanging over his back by the hind legs, and threw it into the sea over the gunnel; the pig floundered at first; but after a few seconds, turned its head away from the ship, and swam for the shore."

"He goes ashore straight enough," said Ready, who, with Mr. Seagrave and William, was watching the animal; but a minute afterwards, Ready exclaimed,—

"I thought as much—we've lost him!"

"How?" replied Mr. Seagrave.

"D'ye see that black thing above water pushing so fast to the animal—that's the back fin of a shark, and he will have the poor thing—there, he's got him!" said Ready, as the pig disappeared under the water with a heavy splash. "Well, he's gone; better the pig than your little children, Mr. Seagrave."

"Yes, indeed, God be praised!—that monster might have been close to them at the time that Juno took them into the water."

"He was not far off, I reckon," replied Ready;

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SHARK AND PIG.

"however, he must be content with what he has got, for he'll get no more. We'll go down now and tie the legs of the other four pigs, and bring them up; with what's already in the boat they will be a good load."

As soon as the pigs were in the boat, Ready sculled it on shore, while Mr. Seagrave and William brought up the goats and sheep ready for the next trip. Ready soon returned; "Now this will be our

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last trip for to-day, and, if I am any judge of the weather, our last trip for some days; it is banking up very thick in the offing. This trip, we'll be able to put into the boat a bag of corn for the creatures, in case we require it, and then we may say good bye to the ship for a day or two at least. I have given the cow water, left a bucket or two with her, and a truss of hay; but I don't much expect we shall find her alive when we come back to the ship again."

They then all got into the boat, which was very deeply laden, for the corn was heavy, but they got safe on shore, although they leaked very much. Having landed the goats and sheep, William led them up to the tent, where they remained very quietly; the pigs had run away, and so had the fowls; but this was to be expected. The beach was quite covered with the quantity of things they had brought on shore.

"That's what I call a good day's work, Mr. Seagrave," said Ready; "the little boat has done its duty well; but we must not venture in her again until I have put her into a little better condition."

They were not at all sorry, after their hard day's work, to find that Juno had prepared coffee for

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them; and while they were drinking it, they narrated to Mrs. Seagrave the tragical death of the poor pig by the shark. Mrs. Seagrave embraced her little boy, who was in her arms, when she heard the tale; and when she lifted up her head again, there was a tear of thankfulness rolling down her cheek. Poor Juno appeared quite frightened at the danger which the children had been in, even now that it was all over.

"We shall have plenty to do here to-morrow," observed Mr. Seagrave, "in getting things into their places."

"We shall have plenty to do for some time, I expect," replied Ready. "In two months, or thereabouts, we shall have the rainy season come on, and we must be under cover before that time, if we possibly can. We can't expect this weather to last all the year round."

"What's the first thing we must do, Ready?" inquired Mr. Seagrave.

"To-morrow, we had better fix up another tent or two, to stow away all the articles we have brought on shore: that will be one good day's work; we shall then know where to lay our hands upon everything, and see what we want."

"That's very true; and what shall we do then?"

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"Why then, sir, I think we must make a little expedition to explore the island, and find out where we must build our house."

"Can we build a house?" said William.

"Oh, yes, sir, and with more ease than you would think. There's no tree so valuable as the cocoa-nut tree; and the wood is so light that we can easily move it about."

"Why, what are the great merits of the cocoa-nut tree?" said Mrs. Seagrave.

"I'll tell you, madam: in the first place, you have the wood to build the house with; then you have the bark with which you can make ropes and lines, and fishing-nets if you please; then you have the leaves for thatching your house, and also for thatching your head if you please, for you may make good hats out of it, and baskets also; then you have the fruit, which, as a nut, is good to eat, and very useful in cooking; and in the young nut is the milk, which is also very wholesome; then you have the oil to burn, and the shell to make cups of, if you hav'n't any, and then you can draw toddy from the tree, which is very pleasant to drink when fresh, but will make you tipsy if it is kept too long; and then, after that, you may turn the toddy into arrack, which is a very strong spirit.

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Now there is no tree which yields so many useful things to man, for it supplies him with almost everything."

"I had no idea of that," replied Mrs. Seagrave.

"At all events, we've plenty of them," said William.

"Yes, Master William, there's no want of them; and I am glad of it, for had there been but few, I should not have liked to destroy them. People might be wrecked here, as well as ourselves, and without the good fortune that we have had in getting so many necessaries, and more than necessaries, on shore; and they might be obliged to depend wholly upon the cocoa-nut trees for their support."

"Well, I think it's time for us all to go to bed," said Mr. Seagrave. "William, bring your mamma the Bible."

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TOMMY AT THE GRINDSTONE.

CHAPTER XIV.

We shall, for the future, omit the regular daily routine of our party on the island, as we shall have quite enough to do to narrate the various incidents which each day brought forth. When breakfast was over the next morning, Ready observed, "Now, Mr. Seagrave, we must hold a council of war, and decide upon an exploring party for to-morrow; and, when we have settled that, we will find some useful way of employing ourselves for the

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rest of the day. The first question is, of whom is the party to consist?—and upon that I wish to hear your opinion."

"Why, Ready," replied Mr. Seagrave, "it appears to me that you and I should go."

"Surely not both of you, my dear," interrupted Mrs. Seagrave. "You can do without my husband, can you not, Ready?"

"I certainly should have liked to have had Mr. Seagrave to advise with, ma'am," replied Ready; "but still I have thought upon it, and do not think that Master William would be quite sufficient protection for you; or, at all events, you would not feel that he was, which is much the same thing; and so, perhaps, if Mr. Seagrave has no objection, it would perhaps be better that he remained with you."

"Would you go alone, then, Ready?" said Mr. Seagrave.

"No, sir, I do not think that would be right, either—some accident might happen; there is no saying what might happen, although there is every appearence of safety; but we are in the hands of Providence, who doeth with us as He thinks fit. I should like, therefore, to have some one with me; the question is, whether it be Master William or Juno?"

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"Take me," said Tommy.

"Take you, Master Tommy!" said Ready, laughing; "then I must take Juno to take care of you. No; I think they cannot spare you. Your mamma will want you when we are gone; you are so useful in gathering wood for the fire, and taking care of your little sister and brother, that your mother cannot part with you; so I must have either Juno or your brother William."

"And which would you prefer, Ready?" said Mrs. Seagrave.

"Master William, certainly, ma'am, if you will let him go with me, as you could ill spare the girl. I was only afraid you would raise some objection."

"Indeed, I do not like it; I would rather lose Juno for a time," replied Mrs. Seagrave.

"My dear wife," said Mr. Seagrave, "what did Ready just now say?—that we were in the hands of Providence. Recollect how Providence has preserved us in such awful dangers—how we are landed in safety. And now, will you not put trust in that Providence, when the dangers are, as I trust, only imaginary?"

"I was wrong, my dear husband, very wrong; but sickness and suffering have made me, I fear,

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not only nervous and frightened, but selfish; I must and will shake it off. Hitherto I have only been a clog and an incumbrance to you; but I trust I shall soon behave better, and make myself useful. If you think, my dear husband, that it would be better that you should go with Ready, instead of William, I am quite content: I was very wrong, indeed, to raise an objection at the time. Go, then, with Ready, and may Heaven protect you both!"

"No, ma'am," replied Ready, "Master William will do just as well. Indeed, ma'am, I would go by myself with pleasure: I have no fears of anything happening; but still we know not what the day may bring forth, and I might be taken ill—I might hurt myself—I am an old man, you know; and then I was thinking that if any accident was to happen to me, you might miss me—that's all—I did not say it for my own sake."

"That I am sure you did not, my good old friend," replied Mrs. Seagrave; "but a mother is foolish at times."

"Over anxious, ma'am, perhaps, but not foolish, begging your pardon," replied Ready.

"Well then, William shall go with you, Ready;

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—that point's settled," observed Mr. Seagrave: "what is the next?"

"The next is to prepare for our journey. We must take some provisions and water with us, a gun and some ammunition, a large axe for me, and one of the hatchets for Master William; and, if you please, Romulus and Remus had better come with us, and Vixen shall remain with you. Juno, put a piece of beef and a piece of pork into the pot. Master William, will you fill four quart bottles with water, while I sew up a knapsack out of canvass for each of us?"

"And what shall I do, Ready?" said Mr. Seagrave.

"Why sir, if you will have the kindness to sharpen the axe and the hatchet on the grindstone, it would be of great service, and Master Tommy can turn it, he is such a strong little man, and so fond of work."

Tommy jumped up directly; he was quite strong enough to turn the grindstone, but he was much fonder of play than work; but as Ready had said that he was fond of it, he wished to prove that such was the case, and Tommy did work very hard; for Ready, who was making the knapsacks, sat by them, and when Tommy was inclined to leave off,

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he praised him for behaving so well, and pointed out to Mrs. Seagrave what a clever boy he was; so Tommy, who liked to be praised, turned the handle of the grindstone until the perspiration ran down his forehead. Before they went to prayers and retired for the night, the axe was sharpened, the knapsacks made, and everything else ready.

"When do you intend to start, Ready?" said Mr. Seagrave.

"Why, sir, I should like to get off at the dawn of day, when the heat is not so great."

"And when do you intend to come back?" said Mrs. Seagrave.

"Why, Madam, we have provisions enough for three days: if we start to-morrow morning, which is Wednesday, I hope to be back some time on Friday evening; but I won't be later than Saturday morning if I can help it."

"Good night—and good bye, mother," said William, "for I shall not see you to-morrow."

"God bless and protect you, my dear child," replied Mrs. Seagrave. "Take care of him, Ready, and good bye to you till we meet."

Mrs. Seagrave went into the tent to hide the tears which she could not suppress. "It's all new to her

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now, sir," observed Ready; "in a little while she won't mind it so much."

"Very true, Ready," said Mr. Seagrave; "but she is nervous and weak just now; and as she never has yet parted with her children for an hour, and her boy is going she knows not where, I think she takes it pretty well."

"She does, sir, she does," replied Ready: "a mother's fears are as natural as a mother's love. If I find I cannot do all I wish by the time agreed, I will come back at all events, and start again."

"Do, Ready; that will give her confidence; and now, good bye, and may success attend you!"

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PIGS IN THE GROVE.

CHAPTER XV.

READY was up before the sun had appeared, and he awakened William; they dressed themselves in silence, because they did not wish that Mrs. Seagrave should be disturbed The knapsacks had been already packed, with two bottles of water in each, wrapped round with cocoa-nut leaves to prevent their breaking, and the beef and pork divided between each knapsack. Ready's, which was larger than William's, held the biscuit and several other

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things which Ready had prepared in case they might require them; and round his waist he twisted two cords, to tie the dogs if required.

As soon as the knapsacks were on, Ready took the axe and gun, and asked William if he thought he could carry a small spade on his shoulder, which they had brought on shore along with the shovels. William replied that he could; and the dogs, who appeared to know they were going, were all ready standing by them, when Ready went to one of the small water-casks, took a drink himself, gave one to William, and then as much to the dogs as they would drink. Having done this, just as the sun rose, they turned into the cocoa-nut grove, and were soon out of sight of the tents.

"Now, Master William, do you know," said Ready, stopping after they had walked twenty yards, "by what means we may find our way back again; for you see this forest of trees is rather puzzling, and there is no path to guide us?"

"No, I am sure I cannot tell: I was thinking of the very same thing when you spoke; and of Tom Thumb, who strewed peas to find his way back, but could not do it, because the birds picked them all up."

"Well, Tom Thumb did not manage well, and

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we must try to do better; we must do as the Americans always do in their woods,—we must *blaze* the trees."

"Blaze them! what, set fire to them?" replied William.

"No, no, Master William. *Blaze* is a term they use (why, I know not, except that there must be a term for everything) when they cut a slice of the bark off the trunk of a tree, just with one blow of a sharp axe, as a mark to find their way back again. They do not blaze every tree, but about every tenth tree as they go along, first one to the right, and then one to the left, which is quite sufficient; and it is very little trouble,—they do it as they walk along, without stopping. So now we'll begin: you take the other side, it will be more handy for you, to have your hatchet in your right hand; I can use my left. See now—just a slice off the bark—the weight of the axe does it almost, and it will serve for a guide through the forest for years."

"What an excellent plan!" observed William, as they walked along, occasionally marking the trees.

"But I have another friend in my pocket," replied Ready, "and I must use him soon."

"What is that?"

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"Poor Captain Osborn's pocket compass. You see, William, the *blazing* will direct us how to go back again; but it will not tell us what course we are now to steer. At present, I know we are going right, as I can see through the wood behind us; but by-and-by we shall not be able, and then I must make use of the compass."

"I understand that very well; but tell me, Ready, why do you bring the spade with us—what will be the use of it? You never said you were going to take one yesterday morning."

"No, Master William, I did not, as I did not like to make your mother anxious about anything; but the fact is, I am very anxious myself about one thing, and that is as to whether there is any water on this island; if there is not, we shall have to quit it sooner or later, for although we may get water by digging in the sand, it would be too brackish to use for any time, and would make us all ill. We have not much on shore now; and if the bad weather comes on, we may not be able to get any more from the wreck. Now, very often, there will be water if you dig for it, although it does not show above ground; and therefore I brought the spade."

"You think of everything, Ready."

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"No, I do not, Master William; but in our present situation, I think of more things than perhaps your father and mother would: they have never known what it is to be put to their shifts—they have never been in situations requiring them to think about such things; but a man like me, who has been all his life at sea, and who has been wrecked, and suffered hardships and difficulties, and has been obliged to think or die, has a greater knowledge, not only from his own sufferings, but by hearing how others have acted when they were in distress. Necessity, they say, is the mother of invention; and it's very true, Master William, for it sharpens a man's wits; and it is very curious what people do contrive when they are compelled to do so, especially seamen."

"And where are we going to now, Ready?"

"Right to the leeward side of the island; and I hope we shall be there before it is dark."

"Why do you call it the leeward side of the island?"

"Because among these islands the winds almost always blow one way: we landed on the windward side; the wind is at our back; now put up your finger, and you will feel it even among the trees."

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"No, I cannot," replied William, as he held up his finger.

"Then wet your finger, and try again."

William wet his finger in his mouth, and held it up again: "Yes I do feel it now," said he; "but why is that?"

"Because the wind blows against the wet, and you feel the cold."

As Ready said this, the dogs growled, then started forward, and barked.

"What can be there?" cried William.

"Stand still, Master William," replied Ready, cocking his gun, "and I will go forward to see." Ready advanced cautiously with the gun to his hip. The dogs barked more furiously; and at last, out of a heap of cocoa-nut leaves collected together, out burst all the pigs which had been brought on shore, grunting and galloping away as fast as they could, with the dogs in pursuit of them.

"It's only the pigs, Master William," said Ready, smiling; "I never thought I should be half-frightened by a tame pig. Here, Romulus! here, Remus! come back! continued Ready, calling to the dogs. "Well, Master William, this is our first adventure."

"I hope we shall not meet with any one more

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dangerous," replied William, laughing; "but I must say that I was alarmed."

"No wonder; for although not likely, it is possible there may be wild animals on this island, or even savages; we must always be prepared for the worst in an unknown country; but being alarmed is one thing, Master William, and being afraid is another; a man may be alarmed and stand his ground as you did; but a man that is afraid will run away."

"I do not think I shall ever run away and leave you, Ready, if there is danger."

"I'm sure you will not, Master William; but still you must not be rash: and now we will go on again as soon as I have uncocked my gun. While I think of it, Master William, as you may have to carry one very often, never by any chance leave your gun cocked; I have seen more accidents happen from people cocking their guns, and forgetting to uncock them afterwards, than you can have any idea of.

"Recollect, until you want to fire, *never cock your gun.* Now, I must look at the compass, for we have turned about, so that I do not know which way we are to go. All's right now—come along, dogs!"

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Ready and William continued their way through the cocoa-nut grove for more than an hour longer, marking the trees as they went along; they then sat down to take their breakfast, and the two dogs lay down by them.

"Don't give the dogs any water, Master William, nor any of the salt meat; give them biscuit only."

"But they are very thirsty; may not I give them a little?"

"No: we shall want it all ourselves, in the first place; and, in the next, I wish them to be thirsty. And, Master William, take my advice, and only drink a small quantity of water at a time: it is quite sufficient to quench the thirst; and the more you drink, the more you want."

"Then I should not eat so much salt meat."

"Very true; the less you eat the better, unless we find water, and fill our bottles again."

"But we have our axes, and can always cut down a cocoa-nut, and get the milk from the young nuts."

"Very true; and fortunate it is that we have that to resort to; but still we could not do very well on cocoa-nut milk alone, even if it were to be procured all the year round. Now, Master William, we will go on if you do not feel tired."

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"Not in the least; I am tired of seeing nothing but the stems of the cocoa-nut trees, and shall be very glad when we are through the wood."

"Then the faster we walk the better," said Ready: "as far as I could judge as we were coming to the island, we must be about half-way across now."

Ready and William recommenced their journey; and, after half an hour's walking, they found that the ground was not so level as it had been—sometimes they went gradually up hill, at others down.

"I am very glad to find the island is not so flat here, Master Willy; we have a better chance of finding water."

"But, look, it is much steeper before us," replied William, as he barked a tree; "it's quite a hill."

"So much the better—let us push on."

The ground now became more undulating, although still covered with cocoa-nut trees, even thicker together than before. They continued their march, occasionally looking at the compass, until William showed symptoms of weariness, for the wood had become more difficult to get through than at first.

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"How many miles do you think we have walked, Ready?" said Willy.

"About eight, I should think."

"Not more than eight?"

"No; I do not think that, altogether, we have made more than two miles an hour: it's slow work, travelling by compass, and marking the trees; but I think the wood looks lighter before us, now that we are at the top of this hill."

"It does, Ready; I fancy I can see the blue sky again."

"Your eyes are younger than mine, Master William, and perhaps you may—however, we shall soon find out."

They now descended into a small hollow, and then went up hill again. As soon as they arrived at the top, William cried out, "The sea, Ready! there's the sea!"

"Very true, Master William, and I'm not sorry for it."

"I thought we never should have got out of that nasty wood again," said William, as he impatiently pushed on, and at last stood clear of the cocoa-nut grove. Ready soon joined him, and they surveyed the scene before them in silence.

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FINDING THE TURTLE.

CHAPTER XVI.

"Oh! how beautiful!" exclaimed William, at last; "I'm sure mamma would like to live here. I thought the other side of the island very pretty, but it's nothing compared to this."

"It's very beautiful, Master William," replied Ready, thoughtfully.

Perhaps a more lovely scene could scarcely be imagined. The cocoa-nut grove terminated about a quarter of a mile from the beach very abruptly,

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for there was a rapid descent for about thirty feet from where they stood to the land below, on which was a mixture of little grass knolls and brush-wood, to about fifty yards from the water's edge, where it was met with dazzling white sand, occasionally divided by narrow ridges of rock which ran inland.

The water was of a deep blue, except where it was broken into white foam on the reefs, which extended for miles from the beach, and the rocks of which now and then showed themselves above water. On the rocks were perched crowds of gannets and men-of-war birds, while others wheeled in the air, every now and then darting down into the blue sea, and bringing up in their bills a fish out of the shoals, which rippled the water, or bounded clear of it in their gambols. The form of the coast was that of a horse-shoe bay—two points of land covered with shrubs extending far out on each side. The line of the horizon, far out at sea, was clear and unbroken.

Ready remained for some time without speaking; he scanned the horizon right and left; he surveyed the reefs in the distance; and then he turned his eyes along the land. At last William said,—

"What are you thinking of, Ready?"

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"Why, I am thinking that we must look for water as fast as we can."

"But why are you so anxious?"

"Because, Master Willy, I can see no island to leeward of us, as I expected, and therefore there is less chance of getting off this island; and this bay, although very beautiful, is full of reefs, and I see no inlet, which makes it awkward for many reasons. But we cannot judge at first sight. Let us now sit down and take our dinner, and after that we will explore a little. Stop—before we leave where we stand we must make a good mark upon the trees close to where we have come out of the wood, or we shall not find our *blaze* again in a hurry when we wish to go back again."

Ready cut two wide marks in the stems of the cocoa-nut trees, and then descended with William to the low ground, where they sat down to eat their dinner. As soon as their meal was finished, they first walked down to the water's edge, and Ready turned his eyes inland to see if he could discover any little ravine or hollow which might be likely to contain fresh water. "There are one or two places there," observed Ready, pointing to them with his finger, "where the water has run down in the rainy season: we must examine them carefully, but not

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now; to-morrow will be time enough. I want to find out whether there is any means of getting our little boat through this reef of rocks, or otherwise we shall have very hard work (if we change our abode to this spot) to bring all our stores through that wood; it would take us weeks, if not months; so we will pass the rest of this day in examining the coast, Master William, and to-morrow we will try for fresh water."

"Look at the dogs, Ready, they are drinking the sea-water, poor things."

"They won't drink much of that I expect; you see they don't like it already."

"How beautiful the corals are—look here, they grow like little trees under the water,—and look here, here is really a flower in bloom growing on that rock just below the water."

"Put your finger to it, Master William," said Ready.

William did so, and the flower, as he called it, immediately shut up.

"Why, it's flesh, and alive!"

"Yes, it is; I have often seen them before: they call them, I think, sea-anemones—they are animals; but I don't know whether they are shell-fish or not. Creation is very wonderful. Now, let

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us walk to the end of this point of land, and see if we can discover any opening in the reef. The sun is going down, and we shall not have more than an hour's daylight, and then we must look out for a place to sleep in."

"But what is that?" cried William, pointing to the sand—"that round dark thing?"

"That's what I am very glad to see, Master William: it's a turtle; they come up about this time in the evening to drop their eggs, and then they bury them in the sand."

"Can't we catch them?"

"Yes, we can catch them if we go about it quietly; but you must take care not to go behind them, or they will throw such a shower of sand upon you, with their hind flappers or fins, that they would blind you and escape at the same time. The way to catch them is to get at their heads and turn them over on their backs by one of the fore-fins, and then they cannot turn back again."

"Let us go and catch that one."

"Indeed, Master William, I should think it very foolish to do it, as we could not take it away, and it would die to-morrow from the heat of the sun. It's not right to take life away uselessly, and if we destroy that turtle now, we may want it another time."

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"I did not think of that, Ready: if we come to live here, I suppose we shall catch them whenever we want them."

"No, we shall not, for they only come on shore in the breeding season; but we will make a turtle-pond somewhere, which they cannot get out of, but which the sea flows into; and then when we catch them we will put them into it, and have them ready for use as we require them."

"That will be a very good plan," replied William.

They now continued their walk; and, forcing their way through the brushwood which grew thick upon the point of land, soon arrived at the end of it.

"What is that out there?" said William, pointing to the right of where they stood.

"That is another island, Master William, which I am very glad to see, even in that direction, although it will not be so easy to gain it, if we are obliged to leave this for want of water; it is, however, possible that we might. It is a much larger island than this, at all events," continued Ready, scanning the length of the horizon, along which he could see the tops of the trees.—"Well, Master Willy, we have done very well for our first day. I am rather tired, and so, I presume, are you; so now

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we will go and look for a place to lie down and pass the night."

They returned to the high ground where the cocoa-nut grove ended, and collecting together several branches and piles of leaves, made a good soft bed under the trees.

"And now we'll have a little water, and go to bed. Look, Master William, at the long shadow of the trees! the sun has nearly set."

"Shall I give the dogs some water now, Ready? see, poor Remus is licking the sides of the bottles."

"No, do not give them any: it appears to be cruel, but I want the intelligence of the poor animals to-morrow, and the want of water will make them very keen, and we shall turn it to good account. So now, William, we must not forget to return thanks to a merciful God, and to beg His care over us for this night: we little know what the day may bring forth. Could you ever have imagined, a month back, that you would be on this island in company with an old man like me, sleeping in the open air? If any one had told you so, you would never have believed it: yet here you are, William, and you see how He disposeth of us as He thinks proper. Good night, sir!"

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DOGS FINDING WATER.

CHAPTER XVII.

WILLIAM slept as sound as if he had been on shore in England upon a soft bed in a warm room—so did old Ready, and when they woke the next morning it was broad daylight. The poor dogs were suffering for want of water, and it pained William very much to see them with their tongues out, panting and whining as they looked up to him. "Now, Master William," said Ready, "shall

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we take our breakfast before we start, or have a walk first?"

"Ready, I cannot really drink a drop of water myself, and I am thirsty, unless you give a little to these poor dogs."

"I pity the poor dumb creatures as much as you do, Master Willy; depend upon it, it's not out of unkindness; on the contrary, it is kindness to ourselves and them too, which makes me refuse it to them; however, if you like, we will take a walk first, and see if we can find any water. Let us first go to the little dell to the right, and if we do not succeed, we will try farther on, where the water has run down during the rainy season." William was very glad to go, and away they went, followed by the dogs, Ready having taken up the spade, which he carried on his shoulder. They soon came to the dell, and the dogs put their noses to the ground, and snuffed about; Ready watched them; at last they lay down panting.

"Let us go on, sir," said Ready thoughtfully; they went on to where the run of water appeared to have been—the dogs snuffed about more eagerly than before.

"You see, Master William, these poor dogs are now so eager for water, that if there is any, they

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will find it out where we never could. I don't expect water above ground, but there may be some below it. This beach is hardly far enough from the water's edge, or I should try in the sand for it."

"In the sand! — but would it not be salt?" replied William.

"No, not if at a good distance from the sea-beach; for you see, William, the sand by degrees filters the sea-water fresh, and very often when the sand runs in a long way from the high-water mark, if you dig down, you will find good fresh water, at other times it is a little brackish, but still fit for use. I wish that this fact were better known among seamen than it is, it would have saved many a poor fellow from a great deal of agony. There's nothing so dreadful as being without water, Master William. I know what it is to be on an allowance of half a pint a day, and I assure you it is cruel work."

"Look, Ready, at Romulus and Remus — how hard they are digging with their paws there in the hollow."

"Thanks to Heaven that they are, Master William; you don't know how happy you have made me feel; for, to tell you the truth, I was beginning to be alarmed."

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"But why do they dig?"

"Because there is water there, poor animals. Now you see the advantage of having kept them in pain for a few hours; it is in all probability the saving of all of us, for we must either have found water or quitted this island. Now let us help the poor dogs with the spade, and they shall soon be rewarded for their sufferings."

Ready walked quickly to where the dogs continued digging: they had already got down to the moist earth, and were so eagerly at work, that it was with difficulty he could get them out of his way to use his spade. He had not dug two feet before the water trickled down, and in four or five minutes the dogs had sufficient to plunge their noses in, and to drink copiously.

"Look at them, sir; how they enjoy it,—so did the Israelites fainting in the desert, when Moses struck the rock of stone, and the water poured out in torrents for their relief. Do you recollect that part of the Scriptures, Master William?"

"To be sure I do. I have a picture of it at home."

"Well, I don't think any Israelite among them felt more grateful than I do now, William. This was the one thing wanting, but it was the one

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thing indispensable. Now we have everything we can wish for on this island, and if we are only content, we may be happy—ay, much happier than are those who are worrying themselves to heap up riches, not knowing who shall gather them. See, the poor animals have had enough at last—and how they have swelled themselves out! Now, shall we go back to breakfast?"

"Yes," replied William: "I shall enjoy it now, and have a good drink of water myself."

"That is a plenteous spring, depend upon it, sir," said Ready, as they walked back to where they had slept and left their knapsacks; "but we must clear it out further up among the trees, where the sun cannot reach it, and then it will be cool, and not be dried up. We shall have plenty of work for the next year at least, if we remain here. Where we are now will be a capital spot to build our house on."

As soon as the breakfast was over, Ready said,—"Now we must go down and explore the other point, for you see, Master William, I have not yet found a passage through the reef, and as our little boat must come round this side of the island, it is at the point on this side that I must try to find an entrance. When I was on the opposite point it did

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appear to me that the water was not broken close to this point; and should there be a passage we shall be very fortunate."

They soon arrived at the end of the point of land, and found that Ready was not wrong in his supposition: the water was deep, even close to the beach, and there was a passage of many yards wide. The sea was so smooth, and the water so clear, that they could see down to the rocky bottom, and watched the fish as they darted along. "Look there," said Willy, pointing out, about fifty yards from the beach, "a great shark, Ready."

"Yes, I see him, sir," replied Ready: "there's plenty of them here, depend upon it; and you must be very careful how you get into the water here: the sharks always keep to the leeward of the island, and for one you'll find where Juno bathed your little brother, you will find fifty here. I'm quite satisfied now, William, we shall do very well, and all we have now to think of is moving away from the other side of the island as fast as possible."

"Shall we go back to-day?"

"Yes, I think so, for we shall only be idle here, and your mother is anxious about you, depend upon it. It is not twelve o'clock, I should think,

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and we shall have plenty of time; for you see it is one thing to walk through a wood and mark your way, and another to go back again with the path pointed out to you. So I think we had better start at once; we will leave the spade and axe here, for it is no use taking them back again. The musket I will carry, for although it is not likely to be wanted, still we must always be prepared. First, let us go back and look at the spring, and see how the water flows, and then we will be off."

As they walked along the edge of the sandy beach, they found the sea-birds hovering close to them; all of a sudden a large shoal of fish threw themselves high and dry on the sand, and they were followed by several of a larger size, which also lay flapping on the beach, while the sea-birds, darting down close to the feet of William and Ready, and seizing up the fish, flew away with them.

"How very strange," said William, surprised.

"Yes, sir; but you see how it is—the small fish were chased by the larger ones, which are bonettas, and in their fright ran upon the beach. These bonettas were so anxious to catch them, that they came on shore also, and then the gannets

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picked them all up. There's a moral in this, Master William,—when people are too eager in their pursuit they run blindly into danger."

"But the little fish were not in pursuit?"

"No; I referred to the large—with the little fish it was out of the frying-pan into the fire, as the old proverb says: but let us go on to the spring."

They found the hole which Ready had dug quite full of water, and, tasting it, it proved very sweet and good. Overjoyed at this discovery, they covered up the articles they agreed to leave behind them with some boughs under the notched cocoa-nut trees, and, calling the dogs, set off on their journey back again to the cove.

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HAULING UP THE BOAT.

CHAPTER XVIII.

GUIDED by the marks made on the trees, William and Ready made rapid progress in their return, and in less than two hours found themselves almost clear of the wood, which had taken them nearly eight hours to force their way through on the day before.

"I feel the wind now, Ready," observed William,

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"and we must be nearly through the wood; but it appears to me to be very dark."

"I was just thinking the same, sir," replied Ready. "I should not wonder if there is a storm brewing up; and if so, the sooner we are back again the better, for your mother will be frightened."

As they proceeded, the rustling and waving of the boughs of the trees, and ever and anon a gust of wind, followed by a moaning and creaking sound, proved that such was the fact; and as they emerged from the grove, they perceived that the sky, as it became visible to them, was of one dark leaden hue, and no longer of the brilliant blue which it usually had presented to their sight.

"There is indeed a gale coming on, Master William," said Ready, as they cleared the wood: "let us go on to the huts as fast as possible, for we must see that all is as secure as we can make it."

The dogs now bounded forward; and at their appearance at the huts Mr. Seagrave and Juno came out, and seeing Ready and William advancing, made known the welcome tidings to Mrs. Seagrave, who, with the children, had remained within. In a moment more William was pressed in his mother's arms.

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"I am glad that you are come back, Ready," said Mr. Seagrave, shaking him by the hand after he had embraced William, "for I fear that bad weather is coming on."

"I am sure of it," replied Ready, "and we must expect a blusterous night. It indeed looks threatening. This will be one of the storms which are forerunners of the rainy season. However, sir, we have good news for you, and must only take this as a warning to hasten our departure as soon as possible. We shall have fine weather after this for a month or so, although we must expect a breeze now and then. However, we must work hard, and do our best; and now, if you please, sir, you and Juno, Master William and I, will take the first precaution necessary, which is to go down and, between us, haul up our little boat as far from the beach as we possibly can, for the waves will be high and run a long way up, and our boat will be our main dependence soon."

The four went down as soon as Ready had sawed the ends of the spars which had been cut off, into three rollers, to fix under the keel; with the help afforded by them, the boat was soon hauled up high into the brushwood, where it was considered by Ready to be perfectly safe.

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"I meant to have worked upon her immediately," observed Ready; "but I must wait now till the gale is over; and I did hope to have got on board once more, and look after some things which I have since remembered would have been useful, and to see if that poor cow was alive yet; but I strongly suspect," continued he, looking at the weather, "that we shall never go on board of that poor vessel again. Hear the moaning of the coming storm, sir; look how the sea-birds wheel about and scream, as if to proclaim her doom; but we must not wait here, sir, now—the tents must be made more secure, for they will have to hold up against no small force of wind, if I mistake not: it won't do for madam and the children to be blown into the woods." When they arrived at the tents, they found Master Tommy, who had come out to speak to them.

"Well, Tommy, how are you?" said William.

"I am very well, and so is mamma; we did not want you to come back—I took care of them all."

"I don't doubt but you were very useful, Master Tommy," replied Ready; "now you must come and help us to get some cord and canvass out of the stores, that we may prevent the rain from coming into your mamma's tent; so take my hand, and come

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along, and leave William to tell mamma what we have been doing."

Ready, assisted by Mr. Seagrave, got out some heavy canvass and lines, and commenced putting it as a double cover over the tents, to keep out the rain; they also secured the tents with guys and stays of rope, so as to prevent them being blown down; while Juno with a shovel deepened the trench which had been made round the tents, so that the water might run off more easily. They did not leave off work until all was completed, and then they sat down to a late meal. During the time they were at work, Ready had made Mr. Seagrave acquainted with what they had discovered and done during the exploring expedition, and the adventure with the pigs made them all laugh heartily.

As the sun went down, the weather threatened still more; the wind now blew strong, and the rocky beach was lashed by the waves, and white with spray, while the surf roared as it poured in and broke upon the sand in the cove. The whole family had retired to bed except Ready, who said that he would watch the weather a little before he turned in. The old man walked towards the beach and leaned against the gunnel of the little boat,

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which they had hauled up in the brushwood, and there he remained with his keen grey eye fixed upon the distance, which was now one opaque mass, except where the white foam of the waters gleamed through the darkness of the night! "Yes!" thought he; "the winds and the waves are summoned to do His bidding, and evenly do they work together — as one rises, so does the other; when one howls, the other roars in concert — hand in hand they go in their fury and their force. Had they been called up but one week since, where would have been those who have now been, as it were, entrusted to my weak help? The father, the mother, the children, the infant at the breast, and I, the grey-headed old man, — all buried fathoms deep, awaiting our summons; but they were restrained by His will, and by His will we were saved. Will those timbers which bore us here so miraculously hold together till morning? I should think not. What are the iron bolts and fastenings of weak man, compared with the force of God's elements? They will snap as yarns; and by to-morrow's dawn, the fragments of the stout ship will be washing and tossing on the wild surf. Well, it will be a kindness to us, for the waters will perform the labour which we could not; they will

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break up the timbers for our use, and throw on shore from the hold those articles which we could not reach with our little strength. We shall have more cause to be thankful." A sharp flash of lightning struck upon the old man's eyes, and obstructed his vision for the moment. "The storm will soon be at its height," thought he: "I will watch the tents, and see how they stand up against its force." Ready turned away to walk to the tents; and, as he did so, the rain came pattering down, and the wind howled louder than before. In a minute or two the darkness became so intense that he could hardly find his way back to the tents. He turned round, but could not see, for he was blinded by the heavy rain. As nothing could be done, the old man went into the tent, and sheltered himself from the storm, although he would not lie down lest his services might be required. Although the others had retired to bed, with the exception of Tommy and the children, they had not taken off their clothes; Mr. Seagrave had thrown himself down without undressing; and William, perceiving this, had done the same. Mrs. Seagrave, although she would not show her alarm, had also remained dressed, and Juno had followed her example.

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TENTS BLOWN DOWN.

CHAPTER XIX.

The storm now raged furiously, the lightning was accompanied by loud peals of thunder, and the children awoke and cried with fright, till they were hushed to sleep again. The wind howled as it pressed with all its violence against the tents, while the rain poured off in torrents. One moment the canvass of the tents would bulge in, and the cords which held it strain and crack; at another, an eddy

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of wind would force out the canvass, which would flap and flap, while the rain found many an entrance. The night was intensely dark, and the fury of the elements was horrible. As we stated in the first part of our narrative, the tent in which Mrs Seagrave and the children reposed was on the outside of the others, and therefore the most exposed. It was about midnight that the wind burst on them with greater violence than before. A loud crash was heard by Ready and Mr. Seagrave, followed by the shrieks of Mrs. Seagrave and Juno: the pegs of the tents had given way, and the inmates were exposed to the fury of the elements. Ready rushed out followed by Mr. Seagrave and William. So strong was the wind and beating rain, and such was the darkness, that it was with some difficulty that by their united efforts the women and children could be extricated. Master Tommy was the first taken up by Ready: his courage had all gone, and he was bellowing most furiously. William took Albert in charge and carried him into the other tent, where Tommy sat in his wet shirt roaring most melodiously. Juno, Mrs. Seagrave, and the little girl were at last carried away and taken into the other tent: fortunately no one was hurt, although the frightened children could not be pacified, and

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joined a chorus with Tommy; but it was of little consequence, for the wind was so loud that they could scarcely hear one another speak. Nothing more could be done except putting the children into the beds, and then the whole party sat up the remainder of the night listening to the noise of the wind, the roaring of the sea, and the loud patters of the rain against the canvass; and a dreadful and weary and melancholy night they did pass, anxiously waiting for the morning. At dawn of day, Ready went out of the tent, and found that the gale had spent its force, and had already much abated; but it was not one of those bright glorious mornings to which they had been accustomed since their arrival at the island: the sky was still dark, and the clouds were chasing each other wildly; there was neither sun nor blue sky to be seen: it still rained, but only at intervals, and the earth was soft and spongy; the little cove, but the day before so beautiful, was now a mass of foaming and tumultuous waves, and the surf was thrown many yards upon the beach; the horizon was confused—you could not distinguish the line between the water and the sky, and the whole shore of the island was lined with a white foam. Ready turned his eyes to where the ship had been fixed on the rocks; it

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was no longer there—the whole frame had disappeared; but the fragments of it, and the contents of the holds, were floating about in every direction, or tossing amongst the surf on the beach.

"I thought as much," said Ready, pointing to where the ship had lain, as he turned round and found that Mr. Seagrave had followed him; "look, sir, this gale has broken her up entirely. This is a warning to us not to remain here any longer; we must make the most of the fine weather which we may have before the rainy season sets in—and we have no time to spare, sir, I can tell you."

"I agree with you, Ready," replied Mr. Seagrave,—"and there is another proof of it," pointing to the tent which had been blown down. "It was a good mercy that none of them were hurt."

"Very true, sir; but the gale is breaking, and we shall have fine weather to-morrow. Let us now see what we can do with the tent, while Master William and Juno try if they can get any breakfast."

They set to work. Ready and Mr. Seagrave made it fast with fresh cords and pegs, and very soon had it all ready; but the beds and bedding were wet through. They hauled over the wet

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canvass, and then left it to go to their breakfast, to which Juno had summoned them.

"We need do no more at present, sir," said Ready, "by night-time it will not be so wet, and we can handle it easier. I see a break in the sky now, which promises fine weather soon—the gale was too fierce to last long. And now, sir," said Ready, "we had better work hard to-day, for we may save a great many things, which may be dashed to pieces on the rocks, if we do not haul them on the beach. We can do without Juno; and I don't think we want Master Tommy, who must stay here and take care of his mamma."

Tommy was, however, rather sulky after the events of the night; and he gave no answer.

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COLLECTING STORES.

CHAPTER XX.

THEY went down to the beach. Ready first procured from the stores a good stout rope; and as the waves threw up casks and timbers of the vessel, they stopped them from being washed back again, and either rolled or hauled them up with the rope until they were safely landed. This occupied them for the major part of the day; and yet they had not collected a quarter of the articles that were in their reach, independent of the quantity

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which floated about out at sea and at the entrance of the cove.

"Well, sir," said Ready, "I think we have done a good day's work; to-morrow we shall be able to do much more, for the sea you see is going down already, and the sun is showing himself from the corner of that cloud. Now we will go to supper, and then see if we can make ourselves more comfortable for the night."

The tent which had not been blown down was given to Mrs. Seagrave and the children, and the other was fitted up as well as it could be. The bedding being all wet, they procured some sails from the stores, which being stowed away farther in the grove, had not suffered much from the tempest; and, spreading the canvass, they lay down, and the night passed without any disaster, for the wind was now lulled to a pleasant breeze.

The next morning the sun shone bright—the air was fresh and bracing; but a slight breeze rippled the waters, and there was little or no surf. The various fragments of the wreck were tossed by the little surf that still remained; many things were lying on the beach which had landed during the night, and many more required but a little trouble to secure them. There appeared to be a sort of

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indraught into the cove, as all the articles which had been floating out at sea were now gradually coming on shore in that direction. Ready and Mr. Seagrave worked till breakfast-time, and had by that time saved a great many casks and packages.

After breakfast they went down again to the beach and resumed their labours. "Look, Ready; what is that?" said William, who was with them, as he pointed to a white-looking mass floating in the cove.

"That, sir, is the poor cow; and if you look again, you will see the sharks are around, making a feast of her: don't you see them?"

"Yes, I do—what a quantity!"

"Yes, there's no want of them, Master William; so be very careful how you get into the water, and never let Master Tommy go near it, for they don't care how shallow it is when they see their food. But now, sir," said Ready, "I must leave you and Master William to do what you can in saving any more of the wreck, while I set to and put the boat in proper repair; we shall want her directly, and the sooner she is in order the better."

Ready left them at their employment, and went away for his tools to repair the boat. During this time Mr. Seagrave and William had occupied them-

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selves in collecting the different articles thrown on shore, and rolling up the casks as far as they could. As for the timbers and planks of the vessel, they left them to be landed whenever chance might direct; they had more than enough for any present use, or, indeed, for any use which it appeared they might have for a long while.

As it would take some days for Ready to put the boat into proper order, Mr. Seagrave determined that he would go to the other side of the island with William, that he might examine it himself; and as Mrs. Seagrave had no objection to be left with Ready and Juno, on the third day after the gale they set off. William led the way, guiding his footsteps through the grove by the blazing of the cocoa-nut trees; and in two hours they reached their destination.

"Is not this beautiful, father?" said William.

"Yes, indeed it is, my dear boy," replied Mr. Seagrave. "I fancied that nothing could be more beautiful than the spot where we reside on the other side of the island, but this surpasses it, not only in variety, but in extent."

"And now let us examine the spring, father," said William leading the way to the ravine.

The spring was full and flowing, and the water

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excellent. They then directed their steps towards the sandy beach, and having walked some time, sat down upon a coral rock.

"Who would have ever imagined, William," said Mr. Seagrave, "that this island, and so many more which abound in the Pacific Ocean, could have been raised by the work of little insects not bigger than a pin's head?"

"Insects, father!" replied William.

"Yes, insects. Give me that piece of dead coral, William. Do you see that on every branch there are a hundred little holes? Well, in every one of these little holes once lived a sea insect; and as these insects increase, so do the branches of the coral trees."

"Yes, I understand that; but how do you make out that this island was made by them? that's what I want to know."

"Nevertheless it is true, William, that almost all the islands in these seas have been made by the labour and increase of these small animals. The coral grows at first at the bottom of the sea, where it is not disturbed by the winds or waves: by degrees, as it increases, it advances higher and higher to the surface, till at last it comes near to the top of the water; then it is like

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those reefs which you see out there, William, and it is stopped very much in its growth by the force of the winds and waves, which break it off, and of course it never grows above the water, for if it did, the animals would die."

"Then how does it become an island?"

"By very slow degrees; the time, perhaps, much depending upon chance: for instance, a log of wood floating about, and covered with barnacles, may ground upon the coral reefs; that would be a sufficient commencement, for it would remain above water, and then shelter the coral to leeward of it, until a flat rock had formed, level with the edge of the water. The sea birds are always looking for a place to rest upon, and they would soon find it, and then their droppings would, in course of time, form a little patch above water, and other floating substances would be thrown on it; and land birds who are blown out to sea, might rest themselves on it, and the seeds from their stomachs, when dropped, would grow into trees or bushes."

"I understand that."

"Well then, William, you observe there is an island commenced, as it were, and, once commenced, it soon increases, for the coral would then be pro-

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tected to leeward, and grow up fast. Do you observe how the coral reefs extend at this side of the island, where they are protected from the winds and waves; and how different it is on the weather side, which we have just left? Just so the little patch above water protects the corals to leeward, and there the island increases fast; for the birds not only settle on it, but they make their nests and rear their young, and so every year the soil increases; and then perhaps, one cocoa-nut in its great outside shell (which appears as if it was made on purpose to be washed on shore in this way, for it is water-tight and hard, and at the same time very light, so that it floats, and will remain for months in the water without being injured) at last is thrown on these little patches—it takes root, and becomes a tree, every year shedding its large branches, which are turned into mould as soon as they decay, and then dropping its nuts, which again take root and grow in this mould; and thus they continue, season after season, and year after year, until the island becomes as large and as thickly covered with trees as the one we are now standing upon. Is not this wonderful, my dear boy? Is not he a great and good God who can make such minute animals as these work his

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pleasure, and at the time he thinks fit produce such a beautiful island as this?"

"Indeed, indeed, he is," exclaimed William.

"We only need use our eyes, William, and we shall love as well as adore. Look at that shell—is it not beautifully marked?—could the best painter in the world equal its colouring?"

"No, indeed,—I should think not."

"And yet there are thousands of them in sight, and perhaps millions more in the water. They have not been coloured in this way to be admired, like the works of man; for this island has been till now probably without any one upon it, and no one has ever seen them. It makes no difference to *Him*, who has but to wish, and all is complete."

For a few minutes after this conversation, Mr. Seagrave and William were both silent. Mr. Seagrave then rose from where he was sitting: "Come, William, let us now find our way back again; we have three hours' daylight left, and shall be home in good time."

"Yes, in time for supper, father," replied William; "and I feel that I shall do justice to it; so the sooner we are off the better."

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REPAIRING THE BOAT.

CHAPTER XXI.

EVERYTHING was now preparing for their removal to the leeward side of the island. Ready had nearly completed the boat; he had given it a thorough repair, and fitted a mast and sail. William and Mr. Seagrave continued to collect and secure the various articles thrown on shore, particularly such as would be injured by their exposure to the weather; these they rolled or carried into

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the cocoa-nut grove, so as to be sheltered from the sun; but there were so many things thrown on shore day after day, that they hardly knew what they had: but they secured case and cask one after another, waiting for a better opportunity to examine their contents. At last they collected a great many articles together, and, with their shovels, covered them over with sand, it being impossible to get them from the beach without more time than they could spare.

Neither was Mrs. Seagrave, who was now getting quite strong, or Juno, idle. They had made up everything that they could in packages, ready for moving to the other side of the island. On the eighth day after the gale they were ready, and a consultation was held. It was arranged that Ready should put into the boat the bedding and canvass of one tent, and should take William with him on his expedition. Having transported this safe, he should return for a load of the most necessary articles, and then the family should walk through the grove to the other side of the island, and remain there with Mr. Seagrave while Ready and William returned for the other tent; and after that, the boat should make as many trips as

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the weather would permit, till they had brought all the things absolutely required. It was a lovely calm morning when Ready and William pushed off in the boat, which was well loaded; and as soon as they were clear of the cove they hoisted the sail, and went away before the wind along the coast. In two hours they had run to the eastern end of the island, and hauled up close in shore: the point which ran out, and at the end of which there was an inlet, was not a mile from them, and in a very short time they had lowered the sail, and were pulling in for the sandy beach.

"You see, Master William, it is fortunate for us that we shall always have a fair wind when we come down loaded, and only have to pull our empty boat back again."

"Indeed it is. How many miles do you think it is from the cove to this part of the island?"

"About six or seven, not more: the island, you see, is long and narrow. Now let us get the things out and carry them up, and then we will be back to the cove long before dark. I shall be glad to be back, for your mamma was not very easy in her mind at your going to sea again, Master William—I saw that."

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The boat was soon unloaded, but they had some way to carry up the things. "We shall not mind such a gale as we had the other day when our tents are pitched here, William," said Ready, "for we shall be protected by the whole width of the cocoa-nut grove. We shall hardly feel the wind, although we shall the rain, for that will come down in torrents."

"I must go and see how our spring gets on," said William, "and get a drink from it."

"Do so; and then you can follow me down to the boat.

Willy reported the spring to be up to the brim with water, and that he had never drunk any water so excellent in his life. They then pushed off the boat, and, after rowing for about two hours or more, found themselves at the entrance of the cove, and Mrs. Seagrave, with Tommy by her side, waving her handkerchief to them.

They very soon pulled in to the beach, and, landing, received the congratulations of the whole party at their first successful voyage, and all expressed their delight at its having proved so much shorter than had been anticipated.

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"Tommy will go next time," said Master Tommy.

"By-and-by, when Tommy grows a little taller," replied Ready.

"Massa Tommy, you come help me to milk the goats," said Juno.

"Yes, Tommy milk the goats," said the little urchin, running after Juno.

"You must be almost tired of eating nothing but salt meat and biscuit, ma'am," said Ready, as they sat down to their meal; "but when we are all safe on the other side of the island, we hope to feed you better. At present it is hard work and hard fare."

"As long as the children are well, I care very little about it; but I must say that, after the last gale, I am as anxious as you to be on the other side of the island, especially after the account William has given me of it. It must be a paradise! When do we set off?"

Not till the day after to-morrow, ma'am, I should think; for you see I must have another trip for the cooking utensils and the bundles which you have made up. If you will spare Juno to walk through the wood with Master William to-

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morrow, we will then have the tent ready for you and the children. Mr. Seagrave will remain with you, ma'am."

"Certainly, Ready: and had they not better lead over the sheep and goats? It will be doing something."

"I thank you for thinking of it, ma'am; it will be so much time saved."

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BOAT UNDER SAIL.

CHAPTER XXII.

Old Ready had his boat loaded and had made sail for the other side of the island long before the family were up; indeed, before they were dressed he had landed his whole cargo on the beach, and was sitting down quietly taking his breakfast. As soon as he had eaten the beef and biscuit which he had taken with him, he carried up the things which he had brought, and commenced arrangements for

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setting up the tent, intending to await the arrival of William and Juno, that they might assist him in getting up the spars and canvass over it.

About ten o'clock William made his appearance, leading one of the goats by a string, followed by the others. Juno came after with the sheep, also holding one with a cord; the rest had very quietly joined the procession. "Here we are at last!" said William, laughing; "we have had terrible work in the woods, for Nanny would run on one side of a tree when I went on the other, and then I had to let go the string. We fell in with the pigs again, and Juno gave such a squall!"

"I tink 'em wild beast," said Juno. "Ah! what a nice place! Missus will like to live here."

"Yes, it is a very nice place, Juno; and you'll be able to wash here, and never mind about saving the water."

"I am thinking," said William, "how we are to get the fowls over here; they are not very wild, but still we cannot catch them."

"I'll bring them with me to-morrow, Master William."

"But how will you catch them?"

"Wait till they are gone to roost, and then you may catch them when you please."

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"And I suppose the pigeons and the pigs must run wild?"

"The best thing we can do with them, sir; the pigs will always feed themselves among the cocoa-nut trees, and will breed very fast."

"Then we shall have to shoot them, I suppose?"

"Well, Master William, so we shall; and the pigeons also, when they have become plentiful, if we remain here so long; so we shall have some game on the island. We shall soon be well stocked and live in plenty. Every year, if it please God, we shall be richer; but now you must help me to get the tent up and everything in order, so that your mamma may find everything comfortable on her arrival, for she will be very tired, I dare say, walking through the wood. It is a long way for her."

"Mamma is much better than she was," replied William. "I think she will soon be quite strong again, especially when she comes to live at this beautiful place."

"We have a great deal of work to do, more than we can get through before the rainy season, which is a pity, but it can't be helped; by this time next year we shall be more comfortable."

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"Why, what have we to do besides putting up the tents and shifting over here?"

"In the first place we have to build a house, and that will take a long while; we must contrive how we can till it is finished. Then we ought to make a little garden, and sow the seeds which your father brought from England with him."

"Oh! that will be a nice thing; where shall we make it, Ready?"

"I have looked out for that: we must put a fence across that point of land, and dig up all the brushwood; the mould is very good."

"Then what next?"

"Then we shall want a storehouse for all the things we have got, and all that are in the wood and on the beach: we must leave them there till we have time to examine them, and then consider what a many trips we shall have to make with the little boat to bring them all round."

"Yes, that is very true, Ready. Have we anything more to do?"

"Plenty; we have to build a turtle-pond and a fish-pond, and a bathing-place for Juno to wash the children in."

"Yes, and myself too," said Juno.

"Well, I dare say a little washing won't hurt

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you, Juno, although you are a clean girl. But first, Master William, we must make a proper well at the spring, so as to have plenty of fresh water: now there's enough for a year's hard work at least, and as we go on we shall find more wants, I have no doubt."

"Well, let us once get mamma and the children here, and we will work hard."

"I should wish very much to see it all done, Master William," said Ready. "I hope my life will be spared till it is done, at all events. I should like to leave you all comfortable, and able to get on without me."

"But why do you say that, Ready? you are an old man, but you are strong and healthy."

"I am so now; but, Master William, what does the Book say?—'In the midst of life we are in death.' You are young and healthy, and promise a long life; but who knows but that you may be summoned away to-morrow, and your father and mother weeping over your body? Can I, then, an old man, worn out with hardships, expect to live long? No—no, Master William; it is folly in the young, but in an old man it is madness and wickedness. Still, I should like to remain here as long as I can be useful, and then I trust I may

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depart in peace. I never wish to leave this island, Master William; and I have a kind of feeling that my bones will remain on it. God's will be done!"

For some time after Ready had finished, neither of them said a word, but continued their employment, stretching out the canvass of the tent, and fastening it down to the ground with pegs. At last William broke the silence.

"Ready, did you not say your Christian name was Masterman?"

"So it is, Master William."

"It is a very odd Christian name! You were called after some other person?"

"Yes, I was, Master William; he was a very rich man."

"Do you know, Ready, I should like very much if you will one day tell me your history—I mean your whole life, from the time you were a boy."

"Well, perhaps I may, Master William; for there are many parts of my life which would prove a lesson to others: but that must be after we have got through our work—not yet awhile."

"How old are you, Ready?"

"I am turned of sixty-four, Master William; that is a very old age for a seaman. I could not

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have obtained employment on board of a vessel if it were not that I am well known to several captains."

"But why do you say 'old for a seaman?'"

"Because sailors live faster than other people, partly from the hardships which they undergo, and partly from their own fault in drinking so much spirits; and then they are too often reckless, and care nothing for their healths, and so their constitutions are broken up and destroyed sooner than those of people on shore."

"But you never drink spirits now?"

"No, never, Master William, but in my early days I was as foolish as others. Now, Juno, we are all ready for you, and you may bring in the bedding. We have two or three hours yet, Master William; what shall we do next?"

"Had we not better make the fire-place all ready for cooking? Juno and I can bring the stones."

"You are a thoughtful boy—it was what I was going to propose, if you had not. I shall be here to-morrow long before any of you, and I will take care that you have supper ready upon your arrival."

"I brought a bottle of water in my knapsack," replied William, "not so much for the water, as because I want to milk the goats and take back the milk for baby."

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"Then you proved yourself not only thoughtful but kind, Master William: now while you and Juno fetch the stones, I will stow away under the trees all the things which I have brought down in the boat."

"Shall we let the goats and sheep loose, Ready?"

"Oh, yes—there is no fear of their straying; the herbage here is better than on the other side, and there is plenty of it. They will remain here, you may depend upon it."

"Well, I will let Nanny go as soon as Juno has milked her; but that will be the last thing to do before we go back. Now, Juno, let us see how many stones we can carry at once."

In an hour the fire-place was made, Ready had done all that he could, the goats were milked and let loose, and then William and Juno set off through the wood on their journey back.

Ready went down to the beach. On his arrival there, he observed a small turtle; creeping up softly he got between it and the water, and succeeded in turning it over. "That will do for to-morrow," said he, as he stepped into the boat; and, laying hold of the oars, he pulled out of the bay to return to the cove.

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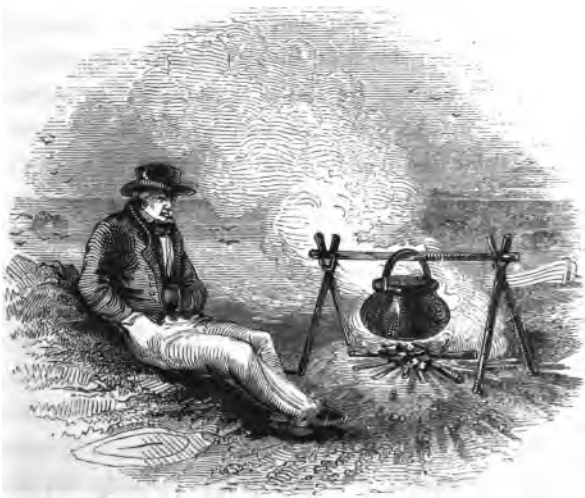

READY MAKING SOUP.

CHAPTER XXIII.

READY arrived at the cove, and, having hauled up the boat, proceeded to the tents, where he found the whole party anxiously listening to William, who was detailing what had been done. The arrangements for the next day were made as soon as Ready joined them. They then separated for the night, but Ready and William remained until it was dark, to catch the fowls and tie their legs,

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ready for their being put in the boat the next morning. At daylight they all were summoned to dress themselves as soon as possible, as Ready wanted to take down the tent in which Mrs. Seagrave and the children had slept; for, with the exception of Tommy, who had been admitted into the women's tent, as they termed it, the others had slept upon some canvass, which they had spread out under the cocoa-nut trees. All was bustle and confusion; and as soon as Mrs. Seagrave was dressed, the tent was taken down, and, with all the bedding, put into the boat. As soon as they had breakfasted, the plates, knives and forks, and some other necessaries, were also put in; Ready laid the fowls on the top of all, and set off by himself for their new location.

After he was gone, the rest of the party prepared for their journey through the cocoa-nut grove. William led the way, with the three dogs close to his heels, Mr. Seagrave with the baby in his arms, Juno with little Caroline, and Mrs. Seagrave with Master Tommy holding her hand, and, as he said, taking care of his mamma. They bade adieu with regret to the spot which had first received them after their dangers; looked round once more at the cove, and the fragments

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of the wreck and cargo, strewed about in every direction; and then turned into the wood. Ready arrived at the point, and was again on shore in less than two hours after he had set off. As soon as the boat was safe in, he did not wait to land his cargo, but going up to the turtle which he had turned the day before, he killed it, and cleaned it on the beach. He then went to where they had built up the fire-place with stones, made a fire, filled the iron saucepan full of water, and set it on to boil; he then cut up a portion of the turtle, and put it into the pot, with some slices of salt pork, covered it up, and left it to boil; and having hung up the rest of the turtle in the shade, he went back to the beach to unload the boat. He released the poor fowls, who were very stiff from being so long tied by the legs, but by degrees they recovered themselves, and were very busy seeking for food.

Ready took up all the plates, and knives and forks, and small articles, examined the saucepan, made up the fire again, and then returned for the bedding and canvass of the tents, with the spars which he had towed astern. It was two or three hours before he had carried everything up, for it was a good distance, and some of the articles were

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heavy, and the old man was not sorry when he had finished his task, and could sit down to rest himself.

"It's almost time that they should have arrived," thought Ready; "they must have started nearly four hours ago; maybe not so soon—it's no easy matter to get a convoy of women and children under weigh." Ready remained a quarter of an hour more, watching the fire, and occasionally skimming the top of the pot, when the three dogs came bounding towards him.

"Well, they are not far off now," observed old Ready.

This was true; in six or seven minutes afterwards the party made their appearance, very hot and very fatigued. It appeared that poor little Caroline had been tired out, and Juno had to carry her; then Mrs. Seagrave complained of fatigue, and they had to rest a quarter of an hour; then Master Tommy, who refused to remain with his mamma, and had been running backwards and forwards from one to the other, had declared that he was tired, and that some one must carry him, but there was no one to carry him, so he began to cry and roar until they stopped for another quarter of an hour till he was rested; but as soon as they

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went on again, he again complained of being tired, and William had very good-naturedly carried him pickaback for some time, and in so doing he had missed the *blaze* cut on the trees, and it was a long while before he could find it again; then baby became hungry, and he cried, and little Caroline was frightened at being so long in the wood, and she cried; and Tommy, because William could carry him no longer, cried louder than all the rest; so they stopped again, and all had a drink out of the bottle of water, which William had brought with them, after which they got on better, and arrived at last so very warm and exhausted, that Mrs. Seagrave went into the tent with the children to repose a little, before she could even look at the place which was to be their future residence.

"I think," said Mr. Seagrave, who had given the baby to Juno, "that this little journey of to-day has been a pretty good proof of how helpless we should have been without you, Ready."

"I am glad that you are here, sir," replied Ready, "it is a weight off my mind; now you will get on better. I think that after a while you may live very comfortably here; but still we have much to do. As soon as Madam has rested, we will have our dinner and then fix up our own tent, which

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will be quite enough after such a hard day's work. To-morrow we will begin in good earnest."

"Do you go back to the cove to-morrow, Ready?"

"Yes, sir, we want our stores here; I must bring some beef and pork, flour and peas, besides many other things which we cannot do without: it will take about three trips to empty our store-houses; and as to the other things, we can examine them and bring them down at our leisure—they will remain there a long time without taking any harm. As soon as I have made those three trips in the boat, we can then work here altogether."

"But I can do something in the mean time."

"Oh, yes, there is plenty for you to do."

"Shall you take William with you?"

"No, sir; he will be more useful here, and I can do without him."

Mr. Seagrave went into the tent and found his wife much refreshed; but the children had all fallen fast asleep on the beds. They waited another half-hour, and then woke Tommy and Caroline, that they might all sit down to dinner.

"Dear me," exclaimed William, as Ready took the cover off the saucepan, "what is it that you have so good there?"

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"It's a treat I have prepared for you all," replied Ready. "I know that you are tired of salt meat, so now you are going to feed like aldermen."

"Why, what is it, Ready?" said Mrs. Seagrave; "it smells very good."

"It is turtle-soup, ma'am; and I hope you will like it; for if you do, you may often have it, now that you are on this side of the island."

"Indeed, it really is excellent; but it wants a little salt. Have you any salt, Juno?"

"Got a little, ma'am. Very little left," replied Juno.

"What shall we do when all our salt is gone?" said Mrs. Seagrave.

"Juno must get some more," replied Ready.

"How I get salt?—hab none left," replied Juno, looking at Ready.

"There's plenty out there, Juno," said Mr. Seagrave, pointing to the sea.

"I don't know where," said Juno, looking in that direction.

"What do you mean, my dear?" inquired Mrs. Seagrave.

"I only mean, if we want salt we can have as much as we please by boiling down salt water in the kettle, or else making a salt-pan in the rocks,

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and obtaining it by the sun drying up the water and leaving the salt; Ready knows that as well as I do. Salt is always procured in that way, either by evaporation, or boiling, which is the same thing, only done quicker."

"I'll soon arrange that for you, ma'am," said Ready, "and show Juno how to get it, when she wants it."

"I am very glad to hear you say so; for I should feel the want of salt very much," replied Mrs. Seagrave; "I really never enjoyed a dinner so much as I have to-day."

The soup was pronounced excellent by everybody. Tommy asked to be helped so often, that his mother would not give him any more. As soon as they had finished, Mrs. Seagrave remained with the children; and Ready and Mr. Seagrave, assisted by Juno and William, got the second tent up, and everything ready for the night. By the time they had finished it was nearly dark. They all assembled, and returned thanks to God for their having gained their new abode; and, tired out with the fatigue of the day, were soon fast asleep.

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MAKING THE WELL.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Mr. Seagrave was the first up on the ensuing morning; and when Ready came out of the tent, he said to him, "Do you know, Ready, I feel myself much happier and my mind much more at ease since I find myself here, than I did before. On the other side of the island everything reminded me that we had been shipwrecked; and I could not help thinking of home and my own

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country; but here we appear as if we had been long settled, and as if we had come here by choice."

"I trust that feeling will be stronger every day, sir; for it's no use, and indeed sinful, to repine; we have much to be thankful for."

"I acknowledge it, my good man, and with all humility. What is the first thing which you wish we should set about?"

"I think, sir, the first object is to have a good supply of fresh water; and I therefore wish you and Master William—(here he is. Good morning, Master William)—I was saying that I thought it better that Mr. Seagrave and you should clear out the spring while I am away in the boat. I brought another shovel with me yesterday, and you both can work; perhaps we had better go there, as Juno I see is getting the breakfast ready. You observe, Mr. Seagrave, we must follow up the spring till we get among the cocoa-nut trees, where it will be shaded from the sun; that is easily done by digging towards them, and watching how the water flows. Then, if you will dig out a hole large enough to sink down in the earth one of the water-casks which lie on the beach, I will bring it down with me this afternoon; and then, when it is fixed in the

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earth in that way, we shall always have the cask full of water for use, and the spring filling it as fast as we can empty it."

"I understand you perfectly," replied Mr. Seagrave; "that shall be our task to-day while you are absent."

"Well, then, I have nothing more to do than to speak to Juno about dinner," replied Ready; "and then I'll just take a mouthful, and be off;—this fine weather must not be lost."

Ready directed Juno to fry some pork in the frying-pan, and then to cut off some slices from the turtle, and cook turtle-steaks for dinner, as well as to warm up the soup which was left; and then, with a biscuit and a piece of beef in his hand, he went down to the boat and set off for the cove. Mr. Seagrave and William worked hard; and by twelve o'clock, the hole was quite large and deep enough, according to the directions Ready had given. They then left their work, and went to the tent, where they found Mrs. Seagrave mending the children's clothes.

"You don't know how much happier I am now that I am here," said Mrs. Seagrave, taking her husband's hand, as he seated himself by her.

"I trust it is a presentiment of future happiness,

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my dear," said Mr. Seagrave. "I assure you that I feel the same, and was saying so to Ready this morning."

"I feel that I could live here for ever, it is so calm and beautiful; but do you know I miss one thing—there are no birds singing here, as in our own country."

"I have seen no birds except sea-birds, and of them there is plenty. Have you, William?"

"Only once, father. I saw a flight a long way off. Ready was not with me, and I could not tell what they were; but they were large birds, as big as pigeons, I should think. There is Ready, coming round the point," continued William. "How fast that little boat sails! It is a long pull though for the old man when he goes to the cove. Juno, is dinner ready?"

"Yes, Massa William, very soon now."

"Let us go down and help Ready to carry up some of the things before dinner," said Mr. Seagrave.

They did so; and William rolled up the empty water-cask which Ready had brought with him.

The turtle-steaks were as much approved of as the turtle-soup; indeed, after having been so long on salt meat, a return to fresh provisions was delightful.

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"And now to finish our well," said William, as soon as dinner was over.

"How hard you do work, William," said his mother.

"So I ought, mother. I must learn to do everything now."

"And that you will very soon," said Ready.

They rolled the cask to the spring, and, to their astonishment, found the great hole which they had dug not two hours before quite full of water.

"O dear," said William, "we shall have to throw all the water out to get the cask down."

"Think a little, William," said Mr. Seagrave, "for the spring runs so fast that it will not be an easy task. Cannot we do something else?"

"Why, father, the cask will float, you know," replied William.

"To be sure it will as it is; but is there no way of making it sink?"

"Oh yes. I know—we must bore some holes in the bottom, and then it will fill and sink down of itself."

"Exactly, sir," replied Ready. "I expected that we should have to do that, and have the big gimlet with me."

Ready bored three or four holes in the bottom of

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the cask, and as it floated the water ran into it, and by degrees it gradually sunk down. As soon as the top of the cask was level with the surface, they filled in all round with the spade and shovel, and the well was completed.

"To-morrow, when the water is settled, it will be as pure and clear as crystal, and remain so, if not disturbed," observed Ready; "so we have done one good job to-day. Now, let us bring up all the other things out of the boat."

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MAKING THE TURTLE-POND.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE next morning, as soon as breakfast was over, Mr. Seagrave observed:—

"Now that we have so many things to do, I think, Ready, we ought to lay down a plan of operations; method is everything when work is to be done: now tell me what you propose shall be our several occupations for the next week, for to-

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morrow is Sunday; and although we have not yet been able, since we have been cast on shore, to honour the day as we should, I think that now we must and ought to keep it holy."

"Yes, sir," replied Ready; "and I would have proposed it if you had not. To-morrow we will rest from our labour, and ask God's blessing upon our endeavours during the six days of the week; and now, as to your proposition, Mr. Seagrave,—shall we begin first with the lady?"

"You must not consider that you have ladies with you now, Ready," said Mrs. Seagrave,—"at least, not fine ladies. My health and strength are recovering fast, and I mean to be very useful. I propose to assist Juno in all the domestic duties, such as the cookery and washing, to look after and teach the children, mend all the clothes, and make all that is required, to the best of my ability: if I can do more I will, and, at all events, you shall often have Juno's services during the best part, if not the whole of the day."

"I think we may be satisfied with that, Mr. Seagrave," replied Ready. "Now, sir, the two most pressing points, with the exception of building the house, are to dig up a piece of ground, and plant our potatoes and seeds; and to make a turtle-

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pond, so as to catch the turtle and put them in before the season is over."

"You are right," replied Mr. Seagrave; "but which ought to be done first?"

"I should say the turtle-pond, as it will be only a few days' work for you, Juno, and Master William. I shall not want your assistance for this next week. I shall fix upon some spot, not far from here, where the trees are thickest in the grove, and cut them down so as to clear out a space in which we will, by-and-by, build our store-rooms; and, as soon as the rainy season has gone by, we can remove all our stores from the other side of the island. It will occupy me the whole of the week, cutting down the trees and sawing them into proper lengths, ready for building the house, and then we must all join our strength and get it up without delay. We must make our windows and, perhaps, our fire-place afterwards; but, at all events, we will be under cover and have dry beds."

"Can you really manage to get it up in time? How soon do you expect the rains will come on?"

"In three or four weeks; the season is not always exact, but certainly not much later. After next week, I shall probably have the assistance of

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two of you, if not of all. Now I think of it, I must return to the cove."

"What for?"

"Don't you recollect, sir, your two-wheeled carriage, packed up in matting, which was thrown on shore in the gale? You laughed when you saw it, and said it would be of little use now; but, Mr. Seagrave, the wheels and axle will be very useful, as we can make a wide path to the place when I cut down the trees, and wheel out the logs much more easily than we can drag or carry them."

"That is an excellent idea of yours, Ready. It will, indeed, save a great deal of labour."

"I expect that it will, sir. Master William and I will go away early on Monday morning, and be back before breakfast. To-day we will fix upon the spots where our garden is to be, our turtle-pond to be made, and the trees to be cut down. That shall be our business, Mr. Seagrave; and William and Juno may put things a little more to rights here, until we can employ them."

Mr. Seagrave and Ready then walked down to the beach, and, after surveying the reefs for some time, Ready said, "You see, Mr. Seagrave, we do not want too much water for a turtle-pond, as, if it

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is too deep, there is a difficulty in catching them when we want them: what we want is a space of water surrounded by a low wall of stones, so that the animals cannot escape, for they cannot climb up, although they can walk on the shelving sand with their flippers. Now, sir, the reef here is high out of the water, and the space within the reef and the beach is deep enough, and the rocks on the beach nearly fill up that side and prevent them crawling away by the shore. We have, therefore, little more to do than to fill up the two other sides, and then our pond will be complete."

"I see it will not be a very long job either, if we can find loose rocks enough," replied Mr. Seagrave.

"Almost all those which are on the beach are loose," replied Ready, "and there are plenty close to us: some of them will be too heavy to carry; but they can be brought here with the aid of hand-spikes and crowbars—we have three or four with us. Now, sir, suppose we make a signal for Master William and Juno, and set them to work. They may do something before dinner."

Mr. Seagrave called, and waved his hat, and Juno and William came down to them. Juno was

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ordered to go back for two handspikes, while Ready explained to William what was to be done. Having stayed with them and assisted them for some time after Juno had returned with the implements, Mr. Seagrave and Ready proceeded to the point, to fix upon a spot for a garden, leaving William and Juno to continue their labour.

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TOMMY ILL.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Mr. Seagrave and Ready then continued their way along the beach, until they arrived at the point which the latter had considered as a convenient place to make the garden. They found a sufficiency of mould, although not very deep; and as the point was narrow at its joining on to the main land, no great length of enclosure would be required.

"You see, sir," said Ready, "we can wait till

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after the rainy season is over before we put up the fence, and we can prepare it in the mean time, when the weather will permit us to work. The seeds and potatoes will not come up until after the rains are finished; so all we have to do is to dig up the ground, and put then in as fast as we can. We must clear away this brushwood, which will not be difficult where the soil is so light, and sow a portion of our seeds, for we cannot make a large garden this year; but our potatoes we must contrive to get in, if we cannot manage anything else."

"If we have no fence to make," replied Mr. Seagrave, "I think we shall be able to clear away quite enough ground in a week to put in all that we require."

"The first job will be to pull up the small brushwood," said Ready, "and turn up the ground: the larger plants we must leave, if we have not time. Master Tommy might be of some use here in taking away the shrubs as you pull them up; but we had better now go on to the grove, and choose the spot for cutting down the trees. I have made my mark. There it is, about fifty yards on the side of the tent. We must walk on about a hundred yards straight into the grove."

Ready and Mr. Seagrave proceeded in the direction

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which the former had pointed out, until they arrived at a spot on a rising ground, where the trees were so thick that it was not very easy to pass through them.

"There is the place, sir," said Ready. "I propose to cut all the timber we want for the houses out of this part of the grove, and to leave an open square place, in the centre of which we will build our store-rooms. You see, sir, if necessary,—although, certainly, there is no appearance of its being likely at present,—with a very little trouble we might turn it into a place of protection and defence, as a few palisades here and there between the trees would make it, what they call in the East Indies, a stockade."

"Very true, my good fellow; but I trust we shall not require it for such a purpose."

"I hope so too, sir; but there is nothing like being prepared: however, we have plenty to do before we can think of doing that. Now, sir, as dinner is ready, suppose we return, and after dinner we will both commence our tasks. I like a beginning, if it be ever so small."

Juno and William returned to the dinner which Mrs. Seagrave had prepared. They were both very warm with their work, which was very hard,

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but very eager to finish their task. Master Tommy had been very troublesome during the whole of the morning: he had not learnt his lesson, and had put a cinder into Caroline's hand and burnt her. He was, therefore, as soon as his father was told of his bad behaviour, condemned to go without his dinner; and he sat down very sulky, looking very wistfully at the victuals as they disappeared; but he did not cry or ask to be forgiven. After dinner was over, Mrs. Seagrave requested her husband, as he was about to go down to the point, with the spade and a small hatchet in his hand, to take Tommy with him, as she had a great deal to do, and could not watch him as well as the baby and Caroline. So Mr. Seagrave took Master Tommy by the hand, and led him to the point, and made him sit down close to him while he cleared away the brushwood.

Mr. Seagrave worked very hard, and when he had cut down and cleared a portion of the ground, he made Tommy carry away to a little distance, and pile in a heap, the bushes which he had cleared away. This Tommy did very unwillingly, as he was in a bad humour. When Mr. Seagrave had cleared away a large piece of ground with his hatchet, he then took his spade to dig at the roots and turn

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up the mould, leaving Tommy to amuse himself. What Tommy did for about an hour, during which Mr. Seagrave worked very diligently, his father did not observe; but all of a sudden he began to cry; and when his father asked him the reason, he did not answer, but only cried the more, until at last he put his hands to his stomach, and roared most lustily. As he appeared to be in very great pain, his father left off work, and led him up to the tent, when Mrs. Seagrave came out, alarmed at his cries. He would, however, do nothing but roar, refusing to answer any questions, and his father and mother could not imagine what was the matter with him. Old Ready, who had heard Master Tommy screaming for so long a while, thought that there might be something serious, and left his work to ascertain the cause. When he heard what had passed he said,—

"Depend upon it, sir, the child has eaten something which has made him ill. Tell me, Tommy, what did you eat when you were down there?"

"Berries," roared Tommy.

"I thought as much, ma'am," said Ready. "I must go and see what the berries were." And the old man hastened down to the place where Mr.

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Seagrave had been at work. In the mean time Mrs. Seagrave was very much alarmed lest the child should have poisoned himself, and Mr. Seagrave went to search among the medicines for some castor-oil.

Ready returned just as Mr. Seagrave came back to the tent with the bottle of castor-oil, and he told Ready that he was about to give Tommy a dose.

"Well, sir," replied Ready, who had a plant in his hand, "I don't think you should give him any, for it appears to me that he has taken too much already. See, sir, this is, if I recollect right,—and I'm almost sure that I am right,—the castor-oil plant, and here are some of the castor-oil beans, which Master Tommy has been eating. Tell me, Tommy, did you eat them?"

"Yes," cried Tommy, putting both hands to his stomach.

"I thought so: give him a little warm drink, ma'am, and he'll soon be better: there's no great harm done; and it will teach him not to eat berries or beans again."

What Ready said was true; nevertheless Master Tommy was very ill for the whole of the day, and was put into bed very early.

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TOMMY AND THE GOAT.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE next day, when Mr. Seagrave, William, Juno, and Ready were all at work at their allotted tasks, Mrs. Seagrave was sitting down at the front of the tent, the little baby, Albert, crawling close to her, Caroline trying to work with her needle, and Master Tommy was making holes in the ground, and putting a small stone into each hole.

"What are you doing, Tommy?" said Mrs. Seagrave.

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"I'm playing—I'm making a garden," replied Tommy.

"Making a garden! then you ought to plant some trees in it."

"No; I'm sowing seeds: look here," replied Tommy, pointing to the stones.

"Stones won't grow, mamma," said little Caroline.

"No, my dear, they will not; but the seeds of plants and flowers will."

"I know that," said Tommy; "but I'm making believe, because I have no seeds."

"But you said you were sowing seeds, Tommy, and not stones."

"Well, but I pretend, and that's the same thing," replied Tommy.

"Not exactly Tommy; suppose now, instead of eating those beans yesterday, you had only pretended to eat them, wouldn't it have been better?"

"I won't eat any more," replied Tommy.

"No, not of those beans; but if you saw anything else which you thought you would like, I am afraid you would eat it, and be as ill and even worse than you were. You should never eat anything that is not given to you."

"I like cocoa-nuts; why don't we have some to eat? there's plenty there upon the trees."

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"But who is to climb up so high, Tommy? can you?"

"No; but why don't Ready climb, or papa, or William? Why don't you make Juno climb? I like cocoa-nuts."

"I suppose they will get some by-and-by, when they are not so busy, but they have no time now. Don't you see how hard they all work?"

"I like turtle-soup," replied Tommy.

"William and Juno are making a pond to put turtle in, and then we shall have it oftener; but we cannot have everything we like when we wish for it."

"What's a turtle, mamma?" said little Caroline.

"It's a sort of animal that lives in the water, but it is not a fish."

"I like fried fish," said Tommy; "why don't we have fried fish?"

"Because every one is too busy to catch them just now. By-and-by you will have some, I have no doubt. Tommy, dear, go and bring your brother Albert back; he has crawled too near to Billy the goat, and he butts sometimes."

Tommy went after the baby, who was crawling towards the kid, which had now grown pretty large,

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and as he took up his brother he kicked at the goat's head.

"Don't do that, Tommy; he'll butt at you, and hurt you."

"I don't care," replied Tommy, holding the baby by one hand while he continued to kick at Billy. Billy, however, would not stand it any longer: he lowered his head, made a bound at Tommy, struck him in the chest, and Tommy and little Albert rolled on the ground one over the other. The baby roared, and Master Tommy began to whimper. Mrs. Seagrave ran up to them and caught up the baby; and Master Tommy, a little alarmed, caught hold of his mother's dress for protection, looking behind him at Billy, who appeared very much inclined to renew the attack.

"Why don't you mind what is said to you, Tommy? I told you that he would butt you," said Mrs. Seagrave, pacifying the child.

"I don't care for him," replied Tommy, who perceived that the goat was walking away.

"No; you are very brave now that he is gone; but you are a very naughty boy not to mind what is said to you. Recollect the lion at the Cape."

"I don't care for a lion," replied Tommy.

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"No, now that there is none to be seen; but you would be very much frightened if you saw one close to you."

"I threw stones at him," said Tommy.

"Yes, you did; and if you had not, the lion would not have frightened you as he did, any more than Billy would have knocked you down just now," replied Mrs. Seagrave.

"Billy never butts at me, mamma," said Caroline.

"No, my dear, because you do not tease him; but your brother Tommy is very fond of teasing animals, and so he gets punished and frightened. It is very wrong of him to do so, especially as he is told by his father and me that he ought not. Good children always obey their parents, but Tommy is not a good boy."

"You said I was a good boy when I learnt my lesson well this morning," replied Tommy.

"Yes, but you should always be good," replied his mother.

"I can't be always good," said Tommy: "I'm very hungry, I want my dinner."

"It is dinner-time, Tommy, that is certain, but you must wait until they all come home from their work."

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"There's Ready coming with a bag on his shoulder," replied Tommy.

Ready soon came up to where Mrs. Seagrave was sitting, and laid down the bag. "I've brought you some young cocoa-nuts, and some old ones also, from the trees that I have been cutting down."

"Oh! cocoa-nuts—I like cocoa-nuts!" cried Tommy.

"I told you, Tommy, that we should have some by-and-by, and they have come sooner than we thought. You are very warm, Ready."

"Yes, ma'am," replied Ready, wiping his face; "it is rather warm work, for there is no breeze in the grove to cool one. Is there anything you want from the other side of the island, for I shall go there directly after dinner?"

"What for?"

"I must bring the wheels to get the timber out; for I must clear it away as I go, until the path is finished. I must have Master William to help me."

"William will like the trip, I do not doubt: he must be tired of carrying and rolling heavy stones. I do not recollect anything in particular that we want, Ready," replied Mrs. Seagrave. "There he comes with Juno, and I see Mr. Seagrave has laid

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down his spade; so Caroline, dear, take care of Albert, while I get the dinner for them."

Ready assisted Mrs. Seagrave, and the dinner was spread out on the ground, for they had not brought the chairs and tables with them to their new residence, as they thought that they could do without them till the house was built. William reported that Juno and he would have the turtle pond complete by the next day. Mr. Seagrave had cleared sufficient ground to plant the half sack of potatoes that they had saved from the wreck, so that in a day or two they would be able to put all their strength upon the cutting and drawing of the timber.

After dinner, William and Ready set off in the boat, and before it was dark, returned with the wheels and axle of the carriage, and several other articles to make up their load; they also had some thick timber in tow, which Ready said would be required for the door-posts of the house. Mr. Seagrave had left his work that afternoon, and gone to the assistance of Juno, and reported that the turtle-pond, although not quite finished, was so far made, that the turtle could not get out if they were put in.

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TURNING TURTLE BY MOONLIGHT.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

"Now, Master William," said Ready, "if you are not very sleepy, perhaps you would like to come with me to-night, and see if we cannot turn some of the turtle; for the season is going away fast, and they will leave the island very soon."

"Yes, I should like it very much."

"Well, then, we must wait till it is dark: there will not be much moon to-night, and that is all the better."

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As soon as the sun had disappeared, William and Ready went down to the beach, and sat quietly on a rock. In a short time Ready perceived a turtle crawling on the sand, and, desiring William to follow him without speaking, walked softly down by the water's edge, so as to get between the animal and the sea.

As soon as the turtle perceived them, it made for the water, but they met it; and Ready, seizing hold of one of its fore-flippers, turned it over on its back.

"You see, Master William, that is the way to turn a turtle: take care that he does not catch you with his mouth, for, if he did, he would bite the piece out: recollect that. Now the animal cannot get away, for he can't turn over again, and we shall find him here to-morrow morning: so we will now walk along the beach, and see if we cannot find some more."

Ready and William remained till past midnight, during which they turned sixteen turtles, large and small.

"I think that will do, Master William, for once: we have made a good night's work of it, for we have provided food for many days. We must, however, try again in three or four days if we

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cannot add to our stock. To-morrow we must put them all into the pond."

"How shall we carry such large animals?"

"We need not carry them; we must put some old canvass under them, and haul them along by that means; we can easily do that on the smooth sand."

"Why don't we catch some fish, Ready? We might put them into the turtle-pond."

"They would not stay there long, Master William, nor could we easily get them out if they did. We must make a pond on purpose for fish by-and-by: we have had no time, for other things have pressed upon us of more consequence. I have often thought of getting some lines ready, and yet the time has never come, for I feel sleepy after our day's work; but as soon as the house is built, we will have them, and you shall be fisherman in chief, after I have once shown you how."

"But the fish will bite at night, will they not?"

"Oh, yes; and better than they do in the day-time."

"Well, then, if you will get me a line and show me how, I will fish for an hour or so after the work is done; for Tommy is always asking for fried fish; and I know mamma is getting very tired

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of salt meat, and does not think it good for Caroline. She was very glad when you brought the cocoa-nuts the day before yesterday."

"Well, then, I will get a bit of candle to-morrow night, and fit up two fishing-lines. But I must go with you, Master William. We don't use much candle, at all events."

"No, we are too glad to go to bed; but there are two or three boxes of one sort and another up in the cove. What shall we do when they are all gone?"

"We shall have to use the cocoa-nut oil, and we shall never want for that. Good night, Master William."

The next morning before breakfast all hands were employed in getting the turtle into the pond. After breakfast, William and Juno finished the pond where the walls had not been raised high enough; and, when they returned to dinner, reported that their task was completed. Mr. Seagrave also said that he had, he thought, cleared quite ground enough for the present; and as Mrs. Seagrave wanted Juno to help her to wash the linen that afternoon, it was agreed that William, Ready, and Mr. Seagrave should all go down to the garden, and put in the potatoes.

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Ready worked with the spade, while Mr. Seagrave and William cut the potatoes in pieces, so as to have an eye in each piece; and while they were thus occupied, William said to his father, in the course of their conversation,—

"Father, you promised me the day after we left the Cape of Good Hope that you would explain to me why it was so called, and also the nature of a colony. Will you do so now?"

"I will, my dear boy: but you must listen to me attentively; and if you do not understand what I say, recollect you tell me so, and I will try to explain it to you. You have been told that we English are now the masters of the sea, but such has not always been the case. The earliest navigators of modern times were the Spanish and Portuguese. The Spaniards discovered South America, and the Portuguese the East Indies. At that time, now more than 300 years ago, England was not the powerful nation which she now is, and had comparatively few ships; neither could the English, in enterprise, be compared to the Spanish and Portuguese nations. The Portuguese, in attempting a passage to the East Indies, arrived at the Cape of Good Hope; but at that period ships were very small compared to what they

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are now; and it blew so hard about this cape, that they could not sail round it, and they at first called it Cabo Tormentoso, or the Stormy Cape. At last they succeeded in their attempts, and then it was called the Cabo da Buona Speranza, or Cape of Good Hope. They arrived safe at India, and, taking possession of many parts, carried on a trade which was a source of great wealth to their country. You understand me?"

"Yes, papa."

"My dear boy, you know very well that a man is born, arrives at manhood and strength, grows old, decays, and dies. As it is with man, so it is with nations. The Portuguese were then in their manhood as a nation; but other nations rose up in strength; and among others the Dutch, who were the first to dispute with the Portuguese the commerce of the Indies: gradually they wrested their colonies from them, and carried on the trade in their stead. Then the English forced their way there, seized upon the colonies of both Dutch and Portuguese, and have ever since held possession. Portugal, that was once the most enterprising nation in the world, is now a mere cipher; the Dutch have gradually decreased in their importance; while the sun is said, and very truly, never to set

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upon the English possessions; for, as the world turns round to it, the sun shines either upon one portion or another of the globe which is a colony to our country."

"Yes, I understand perfectly, papa; but now tell me, why are England and other nations so anxious to have what you call colonies?" replied William.

"Because they tend so much to the prosperity of the mother-country. In their infancy they generally are an expense to her, as they require her care; but as they advance, they are able to repay her by taking her manufactures, and returning for them their own produce; an exchange mutually advantageous, but more so to the mother-country than to the colony, as the mother-country, assuming to herself the right of supplying all the wants of the colony, has a market for the labour of her own people, without any competition. And here, my boy, you may observe what a parallel there is between a colony and the mother-country and a child and its parent. In infancy, the mother-country assists and supports the colony as an infant; as it advances and becomes vigorous, the colony returns the obligation; but the parallel does not end there. As soon as the colony has grown strong and powerful enough to take care of itself, it

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throws off the yoke of subjection, and declares itself independent; just as a son who has grown up to manhood, leaves his father's house and takes up a business to gain his own livelihood. This is as certain to be the case, as it is that a bird as soon as it can fly will leave its parent's nest. We have had a great example of it in the United States, which, some fifty years ago, were colonies to Great Britian, but are now fast becoming one of the most powerful of nations."

"But is it not very ungrateful of a colony to leave the mother-country, which has protected it so long, as soon as it no longer requires its assistance?"

"It may at first appear to be so; but, on reflection, we must decide otherwise: the mother-country has been more than repaid for what it has done for the colony long before the colony is able to throw off its dependence; and, after a certain time, the rights assumed by the mother-country become too onerous to bear: you must not treat a grown-up man as you would a child."

"Now, father, answer me another question You said that nations rise and fall; and you have mentioned the Portuguese as a proof. Will England ever fall, and be of no more importance than Portugal is now?"

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"We can only decide that question by looking into history; and history tells us that such is the fate of all nations. We must, therefore, expect that it will one day be the fate of our dear country. At present we see no appearance of it, any more than we perceive the latent seeds of death in our own bodies; but still the time arrives when man must die, and so it must be with nations. Did the Portuguese, in the height of their prosperity, ever think that they would be reduced to what they are now? Would they have believed it? Yes, my dear boy, the English nation must in time meet with the fate of all others. There are various causes which may hasten or protract the period; but, sooner or later, England will no more be mistress of the seas, or boast of her possessions all over the world."

"I hope it will be a long while first."

"And so does every Englishman who loves his country. Recollect that when the Roman empire was in the height of its power, Great Britain was peopled by mere barbarians and savages. Now Rome has disappeared, and is only known in history, and by the relics of its former greatness, while England ranks among the highest of nations. How is the major portion of the continent of Africa

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peopled? by barbarians and savages; and who knows what they may become some future day?"

"What! the negroes become a great nation?"

"That is exactly what the Romans might have said in former days: What! the British barbarians become a great nation? and yet they have become so."

"But the negroes, father,—they are blacks."

"Very true; but that is no reason to the contrary. As to darkness of the skin, the majority of the Moors are quite as black as the negroes; yet they were once a great nation, and, moreover, the most enlightened nation of their time, with a great many excellent qualities,—full of honour, generosity, politeness, and chivalry. They conquered and held the major part of Spain for many hundred years; introduced arts and sciences then unknown, and were as brave and heroic as they were virtuous and honourable. You have never read the history of the Moors in Spain?"

"No, father; I should like to read it very much."

"And you will like it much more when you have read it: it is a history full of adventures and incidents, probably the most amusing that were ever collected together. I had it in the

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library which I made in the expectation of arriving at Sydney; but whether it is among the books which have been saved I cannot tell: by-and-by we shall have more time to look after them."

"There were two cases of books thrown ashore, I think, father?"

"Yes, two or three; but, if I recollect right I had fifteen or sixteen altogether.—Now that we have finished cutting the potatoes, let us go and assist Ready in planting them and the seeds which we have brought down with us."

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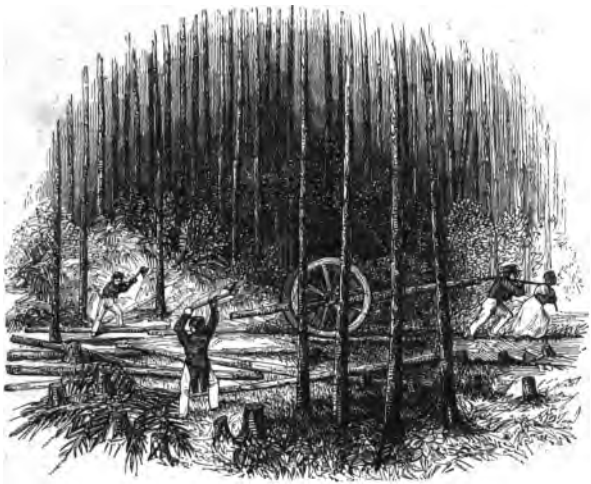

CUTTING DOWN AND HAULING TIMBER.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THAT night Ready sat up for two or three hours working by candlelight (William keeping him company), very busily engaged fitting up the fishing-lines with leads and hooks. At last two were complete.

"What bait must we use, Ready?"

"I should think that the best would be one of the fish out of the shells which are in the sand; but a piece of pork fat will, I dare say, do as well."

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"And whereabouts would you fish, Ready?"

"The best place, I should think, would be at the farthermost end of the point, where I got the boat through the reef—the water is deep there close to the rocks."

"I was thinking, Ready, if those gannets and men-of-war birds would be good eating."

"Not very, Master William; they are very tough and very fishy: we must try for those when we can get nothing better. Now that we have got in the seeds and potatoes, we must all set to to-morrow morning to fell and carry the timber. I think Mr. Seagrave had better use the axe with me; and you and Juno can, when I have shown you how, hang the timber to the axle, and wheel it out to the place where we have decided upon building the house. And now we had better go to bed."

William, however, had made up his mind to do otherwise; he knew that his mother would be very glad to have some fish, and he determined, as the moon shone bright, to try if he could not catch some before he went to bed; so he waited very quietly till he thought Ready was asleep, as well as the others, and then went out with the lines, and went down to the beach, where he picked up

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three or four shells, and, breaking them between two pieces of rock, took out the fish and baited his hooks. He then walked to the point. It was a beautiful night; the water was very smooth, and the moonbeams pierced deep below the surface. William threw in his line, and as soon as the lead touched the bottom he pulled it up about a foot, as Ready had instructed him; and he had not held his line more than half a minute, when it was jerked so forcibly, that, not expecting it, he was nearly hauled into the water; as it was, the fish was so strong that the line slipped through his hand and scored his fingers; but after a time he was able to pull it in, and he landed on the beach a large silver-scaled fish, weighing nine or ten pounds. As soon as he had dragged it so far away from the edge of the rocks as to prevent its flapping into the water again, William took out the hook and determined to try for another. His line was down as short a time as before, when it was again jerked with violence; but William was this time prepared, and he let out the line and played the fish till it was tired, and then pulled it up, and found that the second fish was even larger than the first. Satisfied with his success, he wound up his lines, and, running a piece of string through the

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gills of the fish, dragged them back to the tents, and hanged them to the pole, for fear of the dogs eating them; he then went in, and was soon fast asleep. The next morning William was the first up, and showed his prizes with much glee; but Ready was very much displeased with him.

"You did very wrong, Master William, to run the risk which you did. If you were resolved to catch fish, why did you not tell me, and I would have gone with you? You say, yourself, that the fish nearly hauled you into the water: suppose it had done so, or suppose a small shark instead of one of these gropers (as we call them) had taken the bait, you must have been jerked in; and the rocks are so steep there, that you would not have been able to get out again before a shark had hold of you. Think a moment, Master William, of what would have been the distress of your father and of me (for I love you dearly); think what would have been the agony and despair of your poor mother, when this news should have arrived, and you were not to be found, and never would have been seen again."

"I was very wrong, Ready," replied William, "now that I think of it; but I wanted to surprise and please my mother."

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"That reason is almost sufficient to plead your pardon, my dear boy," replied Ready: "but don't do so again. Recollect, I am always willing and anxious to go with you wherever you wish. And now let us say no more about it; nobody will know that you have been in danger, and there's no harm done; and you mustn't mind an old man scolding you a little."

"No, indeed, Ready, I do not, for I was very thoughtless; but I had no idea that there was danger."

"There's your mother coming out of her tent," replied Ready.—"Good morning, madam. Do you know what William has done for you last night? Look, madam, here are two beautiful fish, and very excellent eating they are, I can tell you."

"I am quite delighted!" replied Mrs. Seagrave. "Tommy, come here. Don't you want some fried fish?"

"Yes," replied Tommy.

"Then look up at the pole of the tent."

Tommy clapped his hands and danced about, crying, "Fried fish for dinner;" and Juno said, "Have very fine dinner to-day, Missy Caroline."

After breakfast they all set out for the grove, where Ready had been cutting down the trees,

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taking with them the wheels and axle, and a couple of stout ropes. Mr. Seagrave and Ready cut down the trees and slung them to the axle, and Juno and William dragged them to the spot where the house was to be built.

They were not sorry when dinner was ready, for it was very hard work; and Tommy was so ravenous, although he had done nothing, that at last they were obliged to prevent his eating any more.

That night, tired as they were, Ready and William went out and turned eight more turtles. They continued felling the cocoa-nut trees and dragging the timber for the remainder of the week, when they considered that they had nearly enough to commence building. Sunday was passed in devotion and quiet. On the Monday night they turned nine more turtles, and caught three large fish; and on the Tuesday morning they commenced building the house.

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BUILDING THE HOUSE.

CHAPTER XXX.

READY had cut out and prepared the door-posts and window-frames from the timber which he had towed round from the cove. He now fixed four poles in the earth upright at each corner, and then, with the assistance of Mr. Seagrave, notched every log of cocoa-nut wood on both sides, where it was to meet with the one crossing it, so that, by laying log upon log alternately, they fitted pretty close, and had only to have the chinks between

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them filled in with cocoa-nut leaves twisted very tight and forced between them: this latter was the work of William and Juno when no more logs were ready for carrying; and, by degrees, the house rose up from its foundation. The fire-place could not be made at once, as they had either to find clay, or to burn shells into lime and build it up with rocks and mortar; but a space was left for it. For three weeks they worked very hard: as soon as the sides were up, they got on the whole of the roof and rafters; and then, with the broad leaves of the cocoa-nut trees which had been cut down, Ready thatched it very strong and securely, keeping the thatch down with the weight of heavy poles slung over the top of the roof with stout ropes. At the end of the three weeks the house was secure from the weather; and it was quite time, for the weather had begun to change, the clouds now gathered thick, and the rainy season was commencing. They had a very violent shower one day, and then the weather cleared again.

"We have no time to lose, sir," said Ready to Mr. Seagrave. "We have worked hard, but we must for a few days work harder still. We must fit up the inside of the house, so as to enable madam to get into it as soon as possible."

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The earth in the inside of the house was then beaten down hard, so as to make a floor; and a sort of bedstead, about two feet from the ground, running the whole length of the house, was raised on each side of the interior; these were fitted with canvass screens to let down by night. And then Ready and William took the last trip in the boat to fetch down the chairs and tables, which they did just before the coming on of the first storm of the season. The bedding and all the utensils were now taken into the house; and a little outhouse was built up to cook in, until the fire-place could be made.

It was late on the Saturday night that the family were shifted into the new house; and fortunate it was that they had no further occasion for delay, for on the Sunday morning the first storm burst upon them; the wind blew with great force; and, although they were shielded from it, still the cocoa-nut trees ground and sawed each other's stems, as they bent their heads to its force. The ightning was vivid, and the thunder appalling, while the rain descended in such a continual torrent that it appeared as if another deluge was at hand. The animals left the pastures, and sheltered themselves in the grove; the dogs crouched under

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the bed-places; and, although noonday, it was so dark that they could not see to read.

"This, then, is the rainy season which you talked about, Ready," said Mrs. Seagrave. "Is it always like this? If so, what shall we do?"

"No, madam; the sun will shine sometimes, but not for a long while at a time. We shall be able to get out and do something every now and then almost every day, but still we shall have rain, perhaps for many days without intermission, and we must work in-doors; I dare say we shall find plenty to do."

"How thankful we ought to be that we have a house over our heads; why, we should have been drowned in the tents!"

"That I knew, madam, and therefore I was anxious to get a house over your head; let us thank God for it."

"Indeed we ought," observed Mr. Seagrave; "and it is, indeed, time for us to read the service. Are you ready, my dear?"

"Quite ready; and I'm sure we shall offer up our prayers this day with grateful hearts, for He has been most bountiful to us."

The morning service was then performed in the new house. Violent as the rain was, it did not

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penetrate through the thatch which had been put on. Ready and William went out to secure the boat, which they were afraid would be injured, and returned wet to the skin. They dined off cold meat, but they were very happy. The storm continued without intermission the whole of the night, but they slept dry and safe; and when awakened by the noise of the thunder and the pelting of the rain, they thanked God that they had found a dwelling in the wilderness upon which they had been cast.

THE NEW HOUSE.

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READY FINDING THE KIDS.

CHAPTER XXXI.

At the end of the last chapter we left off where our party on the island had taken possession of their new house, at the commencement of the rainy season. It was on Saturday, and a storm had come on, which had continued during the whole night; for the storms are very violent in the tropical countries, when the rainy season (which is equivalent to our winter) first makes its ap-

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pearance. When, however, they all rose up the next morning, the clouds had cleared off, and the sun was shining bright. Ready and Juno were the first out of the house—Ready with the telescope under his arm, which he always took with him when he went his rounds, as he termed it, in the morning.

"Well, Juno," said Ready, "this is a fine morning after the rain."

"Yes, Massa Ready, very fine morning; but how I get fire light, and make kittle boil for breakfast, I really don't know—stick and cocoa-nut trash all so wet."

"Before I went to bed last night, Juno, I covered up the embers with ashes, put some stones over them, and then some cocoa-nut branches: so I think you will find some fire there yet. You see, Juno, we must do our best; we can't do everything at once; but next year, if we live and do well, I dare say we shall have a stack of dry fuel, and well thatched, all ready for the rainy season. I was going my morning's round, but I will stay a little and help you."

"Tank you, Massa Ready; plenty rain fall last night."

"Yes, not a little, Juno; you must not expect

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to find the water at the well very clear this morning; indeed, I doubt if you will see the well at all. Here's some stuff which is not very wet."

"I got plenty of fire, too," replied Juno, who had removed the branches and stones, and was now on her knees, blowing up the embers.

"You'll do very well now, Juno," said Ready; "besides, Master William will be out directly—so I'll leave you."

Ready whistled to the dogs, who came bounding out, and then set off on his round of inspection. He first directed his steps to the well in the ravine; but, instead of the gushing spring and the limpid clear water, with which the cask sunk for a well had been filled, there was now a muddy torrent, rushing down the ravine, and the well was covered with it, and not to be distinguished.

"I thought as much," said Ready, musing over the impetuous stream; "well, better too much water than too little." Ready waded through, as he wished to examine the turtle-pond, which was on the other side of the stream. Finding all right, he again crossed the water, where it was now spread wide over the sandy

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beach, until he came to the other point, where he had moored his boat, both by the head and stern, with a rope, and a heavy stone made fast to it, as an anchor.

From this point, as usual, he surveyed the horizon with his telescope; not that he thought that there was a chance of a vessel arriving among these islands; but, still, as it was possible, he took the trouble; but never except when he went out in the morning alone, as he was aware that the very circumstance of his so doing would make Mr. Seagrave melancholy and unsettled. As usual, he dropped the telescope on his arm, after his survey, saying to himself, "Little use doing that."

The gale having blown off shore, the boat had dragged her moorings, and was so far out, that Ready could not get at her.

"Here's a puzzle," said the old man; "how foolish of me not to have made a line fast to the shore. I'll not trust myself to John Shark by swimming to the boat."

"Let me see." Ready took the halyards and sheets belonging to the boat's sails, which he had left on the beach, and bent one on to the other until he had sufficient length of rope. He then

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made a piece of wood, about two feet long, fast by the middle to the end of the rope, and, after one or two attempts, contrived to throw it into the boat. The piece of wood caught under one of the thwarts, and this enabled him to draw the boat to the shore.

Having baled out the water which had fallen into her during the storm, he then landed again and examined the garden.

"Now to find the sheep and goats," said Ready, "and then my morning's walk is over. Now, Romulus, now, Remus, boys, find them out," continued he; and the dogs, who appeared to know what he was in search of, went away in pursuit, and soon found the sheep and two of the goats, but the third goat was not with them.

"Why, where can black Nanny be?" muttered old Ready, stopping a little while; at last he heard a bleat, in a small copse of brushwood, to which he directed his steps, followed by the dogs. "I thought as much," said the old man, as he perceived Nanny lying down in the copse with two new-born kids at her side. "Come, my little fellows, we must find some shelter for you," said he, taking one up under each arm. "Come, Nanny. Down, Ro-

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mulus, down, sir," said he to the dog, who had jumped up at the kids. "How dare you, sir? Down, I say. Aye! there you are down, sure enough." And so he was, for Nanny, not liking the dog's approach to her young ones, had rushed upon him, and butted him till he tumbled over and over. Ready walked back to the house, and brought in the kids, followed by Nanny. He found Mr. and Mrs. Seagrave and the children all dressed. Caroline and Tommy gave a scream of delight when they saw the little kids, and even little Albert clapped his hands. As soon as Ready put them down on the ground, Tommy and Caroline had each of them their arms round one.

"I've brought an addition to our family, Mrs. Seagrave," said Ready; "I must request you to allow them to remain in the house until I can knock up a little shelter for them. This is only a beginning; I expect we shall soon have more."

As soon as the children could be persuaded to part with the kids, Nanny was tied up in a corner, and was very content with fondling and nursing her progeny. Juno and William brought in the breakfast, and as soon as it was

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over, Mr. Seagrave said, "Now, Ready, I think we must hold a council, and make arrangements as to our allotted duties and employments during the rainy season. We have a great deal to do, and must not be idle."

"Yes, sir, we have a great deal to do, and, to get through our work, we must have order and method in our doings. I've lived long enough to know how much can be done by regularity and dicipline. Why, sir, there is more work got out of men in a well-conducted man-of-war than there is in the merchant service in double the time. And why so? Because everything is in its place, and there is a place for everything. If you want anything, you do not lose time looking for it, because you know where to lay your hand upon it. Besides, sir, every man knows what he has to do,—and others know it, also."

"I agree with you, Ready," said Mrs. Seagrave; "method is everything. While one careless little girl is looking for her thimble, another will have finished her work, and I promise you that, inside of the house, as soon as we have the shelves and nails put up, everything shall be in its place, and there shall be a place for everything."

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"I beg your pardon, madam, if I talk too much; but I assure you I never should have known what could have been done by order and arrangement, if I had not been pressed on board of a man-of-war. After having been so long in the merchant service, where all was noise and confusion at the best of times, I found that everything was done in silence; indeed, there was no occasion for any one to speak, except the officer carrying on duty. Every man was to his post; every one had a rope to haul upon, or a rope to let go; the boatswain piped, and in a few seconds every sail was set or taken in, as was required. It seemed to me at first like magic. And you observe, Mr. Seagrave, that when there is order and discipline, every man becomes of individual importance; as any neglect of any one in the duty allotted to him immediately puts everybody else out, and everything goes wrong: besides, the blame is always certain to be given to the party who is guilty. If I learnt nothing else on board of a man-of-war, I learnt to make the most of time, and the most of the strength which I could command."

"You are very right, Ready; you must teach us to do the same," replied Mr. Seagrave.

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"We have so much to do, that I hardly know where to begin; yet, sir, we must work at present how we can, and when we can, until we have got things into a little better order. We have done well up to the present."

"What do you think we ought to do first, Ready?"

"Well, sir, our first job will be to haul up the boat and secure her from harm; we will half-dock her in the sand, and cover her over; for I do not think it will be safe to go in her now to the other side of the island, where the sea will always be rough; indeed the weather will be too uncertain to calculate upon even two or three hours of smooth water."

"There I perfectly agree with you. Now what is the next?"

"Why, sir, we must not leave the tents where they are, but take them down, and as soon as they are dry, stow them away, for we may want them by-and-by; then, sir, we must build a large outhouse for our stores and provisions, with a thatched roof, and a floor raised about four feet from the ground; and then, under the floor, the sheep and goats will have a protection from the weather. We can easily run that up; we must

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To face p. 244, Vol. I.

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cover in three sides, and that we can do with cocoa-nut boughs in a very short time. Then, sir, there is the fish-pond to make, and also a salt-pan to cut out of the rock; but those we must do when we have no other work. Then we have two more long jobs. One is to go through the woods and examine the stores we have left on the other side of the island, and sort and arrange them, all ready for bringing here after the rains are over; and we must also explore the island a little, and find out what it produces; for you see, sir, at present we know nothing of it: we may find a great many things useful to us, a great many trees and fruits, and I hope and trust we may be able to find some more grass for our live stock; for you see, sir, if it is to increase so as to be useful to us, we shall not have food for them here; especially if we want more land for our seeds, which we probably shall."

"I agree with you in all you say, Ready," replied Mr. Seagrave; "now how shall we divide our strength?"

"We will not divide at present, sir, if you please. Juno has plenty to do indoors with Mrs. Seagrave; Master William, and you, and I, will first secure the boat and stow away the tents and

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gear; after that, we will set about the outbuilding, and work at it when we can. If Juno has any time to spare, she had better collect the cocoa-nut leaves, and pile them up for fuel; and Master Tommy will, I dare say, go with her, and show her how to draw them along."

"Yes, I'll show her," said Tommy, getting on his feet.

"Not just now, Master Tommy," said Ready, "but as soon as your mamma can spare her to go with you. Come, sir, a few hours of weather like this is not to be lost," continued Ready; "we shall have more rain before the day is over, I expect. If you please, sir, I will first go to the tent for the shovels, and take them down with me; then I will haul the boat round to the beach and meet you there. You and Master William can take some cord, tie up a large bundle of cocoa-nut boughs, sling it to the wheels, and draw it down to the beach and meet me."

"That will do, Ready," said Mr. Seagrave. "Come, William."

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MR. SEAGRAVE AND WILLIAM FISHING.

CHAPTER XXXII.

As so many cocoa-nut trees had been cut down to build the house, there were plenty of boughs lying in every direction, and William and Mr. Seagrave had soon procured sufficient. They found, on their arrival at the beach, that Ready had brought round the boat, and had laid the rollers all ready for hauling it up. In a very short time the boat was drawn up about ten yards from

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the water's edge, which Ready said was quite sufficient; they then dug from under with their shovels until the boat was sunk about half down in the sand.

Having filled in the sand all round her up to her gunnel, the boat was then carefully covered over with the boughs, which were weighed down with sand, that they might not be blown away.

"I don't see why you should cover the boat up in this way, Ready; the rain won't hurt her," observed William.

"No, sir, the rain won't do her any harm, but the sun will, when it bursts out occasionally; for it's very powerful when it does shine, and it would split her all to pieces."

"I forgot that," replied William. "What shall we do now, Ready?"

"Suppose, as we have two hours to dinner-time, you run for the lines, Master William, and we'll try for some fish."

"We cannot all three of us fish with only two lines," said Mr. Seagrave.

"No, sir; and as Master William knows how to catch them, suppose you remain with him, and I will go up and collect wood and chips for

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Juno's fire. She was hard pressed for it this morning, it was so wet; but if once piled up, it will soon be dry. Be careful, Mr. Seagrave, if you please, and do not hold the lines tight in your hands, or you may be jerked into the water. I've cautioned Master William, but it may be as well for you to caution him again, for he is young and very eager."

Ready met William returning with the lines, and thought it right to remind him of the danger he ran when he was fishing the last time, and then went on to his work, dragging after him the wheels and the axe, as they were no longer required at the beach.

Mr. Seagrave and William were very fortunate; before the two hours were expired they had caught eight large fish, which they brought up to the house slung on the boat-hook, which Ready had advised them to take with them to haul the fish out of the water, that they might not break their lines. Tommy halloed loudly for fish for dinner, and as they had caught so many, it was agreed that the dinner should be put off until some should be got ready, and they were not sorry to eat them instead of the salt pork which was to have been their only fare on that day.

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They had hardly sat down to table, when the rain came pattering down on the roof, and in a quarter of an hour the storm was as violent, and the thunder and lightning as terrific as on the day before. All the out-door labour was again suspended. Mrs. Seagrave, Juno, and Caroline, took their work, for there was plenty to do with the needle and thread, and Ready soon found employment for the rest. William and Mr. Seagrave unlaid some thick rope, that Ready might make smaller and more useful rope with the yarns. Ready took up his sailing-needles, and worked eyelet-holes in the canvass screens (which they had put up in a hurry), so that they might be drawn to and fro as required; and Tommy was given a tangled hank of twine to clear out, which, as he was tired of doing nothing, he worked at very patiently. As soon as Ready had hung up the curtains, he looked under the bedsteads for a large bundle, and said, as he opened it, "I shall now decorate Madam Seagrave's sleeping-place. It ought to be handsomer than the others." The bundle was composed of the ship's ensign, which was red, and a large, square, yellow flag with the name of the ship *Pacific* in large black letters upon it. These two flags Ready festooned and tied up round

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the bed-place, so as to give it a very gay appearance, and also to hide the rough walls of the cottage.

"Indeed, Ready, I am much obliged to you," said Mrs. Seagrave, when he had finished; "it is really quite grand for this place."

"It's the best use we can put them to now, madam," said Ready.

"I am afraid so," replied Mr. Seagrave thoughtfully.

"Ready," said William, after the candles were lighted, "you once half promised me that you would tell me your history; I wish you would tell us some of it now, as it will pass away the evening."

"Well, Master William, I did say so, and I shall keep my word. When you have heard my story, you will say that I have been very foolish in my time; and so I have; but if it proves a warning to you, it will, at all events, be of some use."

"We shall like to hear it very much," said Mrs. Seagrave.

"Well, madam, then you shall hear it;" and Ready then commenced his history as follows:

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History of Old Ready.

"Of course you wish to know who my father and mother were: that is soon told. My father was the captain of a merchant vessel, which traded from South Shields to Hamburgh, and my poor mother, God bless her, was the daughter of a half-pay militia captain, who died about two months after their marriage. The property which the old gentleman had bequeathed to my mother was added to that which my father had already vested in the brig, and he then owned one-third of the vessel; the other two-thirds were the property of a very rich ship-builder and owner, of the name of Masterman. What with the profits of the share he held of the vessel and his pay as captain, my father was well to do. Mr. Masterman, who had a very high opinion of my father, and gained much money by his exertions and good management, was present at the marriage, and when I was born, about a year afterwards, he stood for me as godfather. Every one considered that this was a most advantageous circumstance for me, and congratulated my father and mother,

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for Mr. Masterman was a bachelor of nearly sixty years, without any near relations. It is true, that he was very fond of money; but that they said was all the better, as he could not take it away with him when he died. An end, however, was soon put to all their worldly ideas, for a year after I was born, my father was drowned at sea, his vessel and the whole of her crew being lost on the Texel Sands; and my mother found herself a widow, with a child scarcely weaned, when she was but twenty-two years of age.

"It was supposed that my mother would still have sufficient to live upon, as the ship had been insured at two-thirds of her value; but, to the astonishment of everybody, Mr. Masterman contrived to make it appear that it was his two-thirds of the vessel which had been insured."

"What is insurance?" inquired William.

"Insurance, my dear boy, is paying a certain sum to people who are called underwriters, that in case the vessel or cargo is lost or damaged, the loss or damage is made good to the owners of the vessel or cargo. You pay in proportion to the risk incurred. For instance, in war time you pay ten per cent.—that is, ten pounds for every hundred pounds you insure. Supposing you wished to insure one

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thousand pounds on a vessel or cargo, and ten per cent. was required, you would, if the vessel came home safe, pay the underwriters one hundred pounds; if, on the contrary, the vessel was lost, the underwriters would have to pay you one thousand pounds, the sum which you had insured. Do you understand?"

"Yes; I understand, papa. But I do not understand how an underwriter can make money by it; for many vessels are lost or taken during a war, and then he has such large sums to pay."

"You must recollect, that for one that is taken, or lost, there are fifty or more which arrive safe; and as the underwriters are paid for all those that arrive safe, the business is profitable; indeed it must be so, or there would not be so many underwriters and insurance companies. I beg your pardon for the interruption, Ready."

"No need, Mr. Seagrave; we never should lose an opportunity of teaching the young; indeed you have taught the old as well this time, for I was not so clear of the matter before as I am now. Well, sir; how far the assertion of Mr. Masterman was correct or not, it was impossible at the time to say; but I do know that everybody cried out 'Shame,' and that if he did deprive

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the widow, he had much to answer for; for the Bible says, 'pure religion is to visit the fatherless and the widows in their affliction' (of course, Master William, with a view of assisting them), 'and to keep yourself unspotted in the world.' The consequence was, that my mother had little or nothing to live upon; but she found friends who assisted her, and she worked embroidery, and contrived to get on somehow until I was eight or nine years of age."

"But did not your godfather, Mr. Masterman, come forward to the assistance of your mother?" inquired Mr. Seagrave.

"No, sir, strange to say, he did not; and that made people talk the more. I believe it was the abuse of him, which he did not fail to hear, and which he ascribed to my mother, which turned him away from us; perhaps it was his own conscience, for we always dislike those we have injured, becoming vexed with them, instead of being vexed with ourselves."

"Unfortunately, there is great truth in that remark of yours, Ready," observed Mr. Seagrave; "still, it is strange that he did not do something."

"It was very strange, sir,—at least, so it ap-

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peared at the time; but he was very fond of money, and irritated at the reports and observations which were made about him. But, to go on, sir: I was a strong, active, hardy boy, and, whenever I could escape from my mother or school, was always found by the water-side or on board of the vessels; for I took naturally to everything connected with the sea. In the summer time I was half the day in water, and was a very good swimmer. My mother perceived my fondness for the profession, and tried all she could to divert my thoughts some other way. She told me of the dangers and hardships which sailors went through, and always ended with my father's death and a flood of tears.

"We certainly are of a perverse nature, as I have often heard the clergyman say, for it appears to me that we always wish to do that which we are told not to do. If my mother had not been always persuading me against going to sea, I really believe I might have stayed at home. Mine was a proud nature, when I was a child. I suppose I got it from my father, for my mother, poor thing, was humble enough. I could not bear that any boy should do what I could not; and I often ventured so rashly,

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that I might do more than other boys dared to do, that it was a wonder, as every one then said, that I had not lost my life a hundred times; and my poor mother was continually hearing of some danger that I was in, and she would first scold and then entreat me not to be so venturesome, and then she would go into her room and weep and pray, for I was her only hope and comfort, and all that bound her to the world. I've often thought since, how selfish and unfeeling I must have been. I was too young to know what pain I was giving her, and how anxiety was preying upon her, all on my account. Children cannot feel it; if they did, they would do otherwise, for our hearts are seldom hard until we grow older."

"I agree with you, Ready," said Mr. Seagrave. "If children really knew how much their parents suffer when they behave ill, how alarmed they are at any proofs of wickedness in them, they would be much better."

"We never find that out, sir, till it is too late," continued Ready. "Well, sir, I was little more than nine years old, when, on a very windy day, and the water rough, a hawser, by which a vessel was fast to the wharf, was carried away with a

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violent jerk, and the broken part, as it flew out, struck a person who was at the edge of the wharf, and knocked him into the sea. I heard the crying out, and the men from the wharf and from the ships were throwing ropes to him, but he could not catch old of them; indeed, he could not swim well, and the water was rough. I caught a rope that had been hauled in again, and leapt off the wharf.

"Young as I was, I swam like a duck, and put the rope into his hands just as he was going

READY SAVING MR. MASTERMAN.

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down. He clung to it as drowning men only can cling, and was hauled to the piles, and soon afterwards a boat, which had been lowered from the stern of one of the vessels, picked us both up. We were taken to a public-house, and put into bed till dry clothes could be sent for us; and then I found that the person I had saved was my godfather, Mr. Masterman. Every one was loud in my praise; and, although perhaps I ought not to say it (and, indeed, I do not say it out of vanity), it was a bold act for so young a boy as I was. The sailors took me home to my mother in a sort of triumphant procession; and she, poor thing, when she heard what I had done, embraced me over and over again, one moment rejoicing at my preservation, and the next weeping bitterly at the thoughts of the danger I had encountered, and the probability that my bold spirit would lead me into still greater."

"But she did not blame you for what you had done?"

"Oh no, Master William; she felt that I had done my duty towards my neighbour, and perhaps she felt in her own heart that I had returned good for evil; but she did not say so. The

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next day, Mr. Masterman called upon us; he certainly looked very foolish and confused when he asked for his godson, whom he had so long neglected. My mother, who felt how useful he might be to me, received him very kindly; but I had been often told of his neglect of me and my mother, and of his supposed unfair conduct towards my father, and had taken a violent dislike to him; his advances towards me were therefore very coolly received. I felt glad that I had saved him; but although I could not exactly understand my own feelings at the time, I am ashamed to say that my pleasure was not derived from having done a good action, so much as indulging a feeling of revenge in having put one under an obligation who had treated me ill: this arose from my proud spirit, which my mother could not check. So you see, Master William, there was very little merit in what I had done, as, after I had done it, I indulged those feelings which I ought to have checked."

"I think I could not have helped feeling the same, Ready, under such circumstances," replied William.

"If I had felt it in a true Christian spirit, Master William, it would have been different.

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Returning good for evil is the great duty of a Christian, and had I saved Mr. Masterman, knowing that I was saving him with that feeling in my heart, it had been praiseworthy; but I did not know that it was he when I saved him; and the question is, had I known who it was that was struggling in the water, should I have risked my life for him? or if I had done so, would it not have been with the same feeling which I indulged in after having saved him—a feeling that I had revenged myself on him for his conduct, for there is no revenge greater than in putting an enemy under an obligation?"

"You analyze yourself very minutely, Ready," said Mr. Seagrave, "and I think hardly do justice to yourself."

"The heart is deceitful and desperately wicked, sir," replied Ready. "The impulse which induced me to act was good; the feeling which I indulged in afterwards took away the whole merit of the deed. I am stating what I believe to be the truth, sir; and an old man like me can look upon the past without bias, but not without regret: well, sir, to go on with my story. Mr. Masterman made but a short visit; he told my mother that he would now take care of me, and bring me up to

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the business of a ship-builder as soon as I was old enough to leave school, and that in the mean time he would pay all my expenses. My poor mother was very grateful, and shed tears of joy; and when Mr. Masterman went away, she embraced me, and said, that now she was happy, as I should have a profession on shore and not go to sea. I must do justice to Mr. Masterman; he kept his word, and sent money to my mother, so that she became quite cheerful and comfortable, and every one congratulated her, and she used to fondle me, and say, it was all through me that she was relieved from her distress."

"How happy that must have made you, Ready," said William.

"Yes, sir, it did, but it made me also very proud; strange to say, I could not conquer my dislike to Mr. Masterman; I had nourished the feeling too long. I could not bear that my mother should be under obligations to him, or that he should pay for my schooling; it hurt my foolish pride, young as I then was; and although my mother was happy, I was not. Besides, as I was put to a better school, and was obliged to remain with the other boys, I could no longer run about the wharfs, or go on board the

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vessels as before; and thus I was deprived of all my former enjoyments. I did not see then, as I do now, that it was all for my good; but I became discontented and unhappy, merely because I was obliged to pay attention to my learning, and could no longer have my own way. The master complained of me; and Mr. Masterman called, and scolded me well. I became more disobedient, and, then, by Mr. Masterman's desire, I was punished. This irritated me against him, and I made up my mind that I would run away and go to sea. You see, Master William, I was all in the wrong; and so will all boys be who are proud, and think they know better than those who have charge of them; and now only see, Master William, what I probably lost by my foolish conduct. I say, *probably*, for no one can calculate or foresee what is to take place; but, as far as appearances went, I had every prospect of receiving a good eduction — of succeeding Mr. Masterman in his business, and, very probably, of inheriting his large fortune; so that I might have been at this time a rich and well-educated man, surrounded with all the comforts and luxuries of life; perhaps, with an amiable wife and large family round me, to make me still

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happier, instead of being what I now am, a poor, worn-out old seaman upon a desert isle. I point this out to you, Master William, to show how one false and foolish step in the young may affect their whole prospects in life; and, instead of enabling them to sail down with the stream of Prosperity, may leave them to struggle against the current of Adversity, as has been the case with me."

"It is indeed, a good lesson, Ready," said Mr. Seagrave.

"It is; not that I repine at my lot, even while I regret the errors that led to it. I am not discontented with my position, for that were sinful. An all-wise and gracious God disposes of us as he thinks best; and I can now say with perfect sincerity,—'Thy will, not mine, be done.'"

"Your misfortunes have, however, proved an incalculable benefit to us, Ready," observed Mrs. Seagrave; "for had you not gone to sea, and been on board the ship when the crew deserted us, what would have become of us?"

"Well, madam, it is some comfort to think that a worn-out old seaman like myself has been of some use.—Perhaps, madam, as it is our usual time to go to bed, I had better leave off

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now, and tell some more of my history to-morrow evening."

"If you please, Ready," said Mr. Seagrave. "William, my dear, bring the Bible."

As soon as the evening prayers were finished, the screens were put up, and they were soon all in bed and fast asleep.

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BUILDING THE FOWL-HOUSE.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE bleating of the kids woke them the next morning earlier than usual. The weather was again fine, and the sun shining brightly, and Ready turned out Nanny and her progeny. They had an excellent breakfast of fried fish, and then Mr. Seagrave, Ready, and William went out to their work: the two first took down the

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tents, and spread the canvass on the ground, that it might be well dried, while William went in pursuit of the fowls, which had not been seen for a day or two. After half an hour's search in the cocoa-nut grove, he heard the cock crow, and soon afterwards found them all. He threw them some split peas, which he had brought with him, for the barley and wheat they had resolved to save, that they might sow them as soon as they had more ground cleared; and then, if flour should run short, they had several casks of it on the other side of the island, which they had saved when the ship had been broken up, and were therefore in no immediate want. The fowls, which were hungry enough, followed William home to the house, where he left them and went to join Ready and his father.

"Then, Master William, I think, now that we have spread out the tents, we will, if Mr. Seagrave approves of it, all set to at once and knock up a fowl-house; it won't be more than a day's job, and then the creatures will have a home. There are four very thick cocoa-nut trees close to the house; we will build it under them; it will be a good job over." Mr. Seagrave assented,

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and they set immediately to work. There were many thin poles left, the tops of the cocoa-nut trees which had been cut down to build the house; these they nailed to the trunks of the four trees, so as to make a square, and then they ran up rafters for a pitched roof.

"Now, sir, this is only rough work; we will first put up a perch or two for them, and then close in the side, and thatch the roof with cocoa-nut branches; but there's Juno taking in the dinner, so we'll finish it afterwards."

After their meal the work was renewed; Mr. Seagrave collected the branches while William and Ready worked upon the sides and roof, and before the evening closed in, the fowl-house was complete. William enticed the fowls down to it with some more split peas, and then walked away.

"Now, sir, the creatures will soon find their way in; and by-and-by, when I have time, I'll make a door to the entrance. I think Miss Caroline might be put into authority here, and take care of the fowls and chickens when they come."

"Yes, that shall be her charge," said William;

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"she'll be delighted when she hears that she's to be mistress of the hen-roosts. And now I think we had better roll up the canvass of the tents; we have had a splendid day, and may not be so fortunate to-morrow."

"Very true, sir; we will get them housed, and stow them away under the bed-places; there is plenty of room." By the time that they had folded up the canvass, and William had brought in Nanny and the kids, the sun had set, and they went into the house. Ready was requested to go on with his history, which he did as follows:—

"I said last night that I determined to run away from school, and go to sea; but I did not tell you how I managed it. I had no chance of getting out of the school unperceived, except after the boys were all put to bed. The room that I slept in was at the top of the house—the doors I knew were all locked; but there was a trap-door which led out on the roof, fastened by a bolt inside, and a ladder leading up to it; and I determined that I would make my escape by that way. As soon as all the other boys were fast asleep, I arose and dressed myself very quietly, and then left the room.

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"The moon shone bright, which was lucky for me, and I gained the trap-door without any noise. I had some difficulty in forcing it up, as it was heavy for a boy of my age; but I contrived to do so at last, and gained the roof of the house. I looked round as I stood in the gutter—there were the ships in the port, and the sea in the distance, and I felt as if I was already free: I forgot that I had to get down to the ground. At last I began looking about me, to see how it was to be done, and after walking to and fro several times, I decided that I could slip down by a large water-pipe which went right down to the ground; it was so far detached from the bricks, that I could get my small fingers round it; and I was then as light as a feather, and active as a cat. I climbed over the parapet, and, clinging to the pipe firmly with my hands and knees, I slid down, and arrived at the bottom in safety."

"It's a wonder you did not break your neck, Ready," observed Mrs. Seagrave.

"It was, indeed, ma'am; I often think of it now—but I thought of nothing then except my own wilful way. As soon as I was landed in the flower-bed, which was below, I hastened to the

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iron gates at the entrance, and soon climbed up and got to the other side into the road. I had no hat, for all our hats were hung on pegs in the school-room below; but I didn't care for that. I started as fast as I could towards the port, and when I arrived at the wharf, I perceived that a vessel had her topsails loose, and meant to take advantage of the ebb-tide which had just made; the men were singing 'Yo heave yo,' getting the anchor up; and as I stood watching, almost making up my mind that I would swim off to her, I perceived that a man pushed off in her jolly-boat, and was sculling to a post a little higher up, where a hawser had been made fast; I ran round, and arrived there before he had cast off the rope; without saying a word, I jumped into the boat.

"'What do you want, youngster?' said the seaman.

"'I want to go to sea,' said I, breathless: 'take me on board—pray do.'

"'Well,' said he, 'I heard the captain say he wanted an apprentice, and so you may come.'

"He sculled the boat back again to the vessel, and I climbed up her side.

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"'Who are you?' said the captain.

"I told him the same story, that I wanted to go to sea.

"'You are too little and too young.'

"'No, I am not,' replied I.

"'Why, do you think that you dare go aloft?'

"'I'll show you,' replied I; and I ran up the rigging like a cat, and went out at the top-gallant yard-arm.

"When I came down, the captain said, 'Well, I think you'll make a sharp seaman by-and-by; so I'll take you, and, as soon as I get to London, I'll bind you apprentice. Where's your hat?'

"'I left it behind me,' replied I.

"'Never mind; a red nightcap is a better thing,' said the captain; and he went down to the cabin, and brought me one up.

"The ship, which was a collier, was soon out of port, and before the day had dawned I found myself on the wide ocean, which was hereafter to be my home.

"As soon as the hurry and confusion were over, I was examined by the captain, who appeared to me to be a very rough, harsh man; indeed, before the day was over I almost repented of the step

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which I had taken, and when I sat down cold and wet upon some old sails at night, the thoughts of my mother, and what distress I should occasion her, for the first time rushed into my mind, and I wept bitterly; but it was too late then. I have often thought, Mr. Seagrave, that the life of hardship which I have since gone through has been a judgment on me for my cruelty to my mother, in leaving her the way I did. I was her only child, poor woman; she had nothing else to love but me, and it broke her heart;—a poor return, Master William, for all her care and kindness! God forgive me!"

Old Ready left off for some little time, and the remainder of the party kept silence. William, who sat next to his mother, turned round to her and kissed her.

"I like to see you do that, Master William," said Ready; "it tells me that my story is not thrown away upon you, and I look upon that kiss as a seal that you'll never desert your parent." The tear trickled down Mrs. Seagrave's cheek, as she returned her boy's embrace.

"I'll leave off now, if you please," said Ready: "I don't feel inclined to go on; my heart is full

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when I recall that foolish and wicked deed of mine. Mr. Seagrave," continued Ready, "as it is bed-time, if you please, I'll hand you the Bible. Oblige me by reading that part, 'Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' Oh, sir, what comfort there is in that book!"

Mr. Seagrave read the chapter that Ready requested, and finished with a short prayer, after which they all retired to their beds.

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TOMMY—WHERE'S THE THIMBLE?

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE next morning was fine, and as soon as breakfast was over, they took the wheels down to the turtle-pond, and Ready having speared one of the largest by means of a pike with a barb to it, which he had made on purpose, they hauled it on shore, slung it under the wheels, and took it up to the house. Having killed the turtle, and cut it up, Juno, under the directions of Ready, chose such portions as were required for the soup;

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and when the pot was on the fire, Ready, Mr. Seagrave, and William, set off with the cross-cut saw and hatchets, to commence felling the cocoa-nut trees for the building of the outhouse, which was to hold their stores, as soon as they could be brought round from the other side of the island.

"I mean this to be our place of refuge in case of danger, sir," observed Ready; "and therefore I have selected this thick part of the wood, as it is not very far from the house, and by cutting the path to it in a zigzag, it will be quite hidden from sight; and we must make the path just wide enough to allow the wheels to pass, and stump up the roots of the trees which we are obliged to cut down, otherwise the stumps would attract attention. Not that I think we shall ever want it; but still it is a precaution which we may as well take, as it will not give us a great deal of extra labour."

"I agree with you, Ready," replied Mr. Seagrave; "there is no saying what may happen."

"You see, sir, between ourselves, it is often the custom for the natives, in this part of the world, to come in their canoes from one island to another, merely to get cocoa-nuts. I can't say

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that the other islands near us are inhabited, but still it is probable, and we cannot tell what the character of the people may be. I tell you this, but you had better not say a word to Mrs. Seagrave, as it may distress her; Master William, you will not, I am sure."

"Oh no; I would not say anything to alarm my mother, depend upon it, Ready."

"We are now near the spot, sir. You see, when we have got over this hill, where the trees are so very thick, the fall in the ground will assist in the concealment of the building. I should say we are very near right where we now stand, sir, for we are two-thirds of the way down the hollow, and we have more than sufficient slope to drain off the water."

"How far are we now from the house, Ready? We must not be too distant."

"I reckon we are not a hundred and fifty yards in a straight line, although the road will, by its turning, make it double the distance."

"Then I think this spot will do very well; so the sooner we begin the better."

"I'll just mark out the trees which are to stand, Mr. Seagrave, and those which are to be cut down, so as to leave about four feet of stump

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standing. Master William, will you please to take the other end of the line?"

As soon as they had planned the building, the axes and saw were in full use, and tree after tree fell one upon the other. They worked hard till dinner-time, and were not sorry at the prospect of sitting down to a rich mess of turtle-soup.

"My dear William, and you too, Mr. Seagrave, how very warm you are," said Mrs. Seagrave; "you must not work so hard."

"Cutting down trees is very warm work, mother," replied William, "and hard work will never hurt any one, especially when he dines off turtle-soup; we are very hungry, and shall do justice to Juno's cooking. Why, Tommy, what's the matter with you?"

"Tommy and I are at variance," replied Mrs. Seagrave. "I had my thimble this morning, and had commenced my sewing, when I was called out by Juno, and Caroline went with me, and Tommy was left in the house. When I came back I found him outside, and on going back to my work, there was no thimble to be found; I asked him if he had touched it, and his answer was that he would look for it. He did look, and said he could not find it; I have asked him several

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times if he took it away, and his only answer is that he will find it by-and-by. I am certain he has taken it, but he will not say if he has or has not. The consequence is, that I have done no work the whole morning."

"Tommy, did you take the thimble?" said Mr. Seagrave, gravely.

"I'll find it by-and-by, papa."

"That's not an answer, sir. Did you take the thimble?"

"I'll find it by-and-by, papa," said Tommy, whimpering.

"That's all the answer he will give me," said Mrs. Seagrave.

"Well, then, he shall have no dinner till the thimble makes its appearance," replied Mr. Seagrave.

Master Tommy began to cry at this intelligence. Juno appeared with the turtle-soup, the smell of which was very savoury; and Tommy cried louder when they had said grace and commenced their dinner. They were all very hungry, and William sent his plate for another portion, which he had not commenced long before he put his finger in his mouth and pulled out something.

"Why, mother, here's the thimble in my soup," cried William; "I had very nearly swallowed it."

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"No wonder he said he would find it by-and-by," said Ready, smiling; "he meant to have fished it up, I suppose, from what was left of the soup after dinner. Well, Mrs. Seagrave, I don't mean to say that Tommy is a good boy, but still, although he would not tell where the thimble was, he has not told a falsehood about it."

"No, he has not," replied William. "I think, now that the thimble is found, if he begs pardon, papa will forgive him."

"Tommy, come here," said Mr. Seagrave; "tell me why you put that thimble into the soup."

"I wanted to taste the soup. I wanted to fill the thimble; the soup burnt my fingers, and I let the thimble drop in."

"Well, a thimbleful wasn't much, at all events," observed Ready. "And why didn't you tell your mamma where the thimble was?"

"I was afraid mamma would throw all the soup away, and then I get none for dinner."

"Oh! that was it, was it? Well, sir, I said you should have no dinner till the thimble was found, so, as it is found, you may have your dinner; but if you ever refuse to answer

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a question again, I shall punish you more severely.

Tommy was glad the lecture was over, and more glad to get his turtle-soup: he finished one plate, and as he asked for another, he said, "Tommy won't put thimble in again; put tin pot in next time."

"Massa Tommy, you put nothing in at all," said Juno, who was eating her dinner beside him; "some day you scald yourself all over—little greedy boy."

After dinner they went to their work again, and did not come in again till sunset.

"The clouds are gathering fast, sir," observed Ready; "we shall have rain to-night."

"I fear we shall; but we must expect it now, Ready."

"Yes, sir; and by-and-by we shall have it for days together."

"Ready," said Mrs. Seagrave, "if you are not too much tired, perhaps you will go on with your history."

"Certainly, ma'am, if you wish it," replied Ready. "When I left off, I was on board of the collier, bound to London. We had a very fair wind and a quick passage. I was very

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sick until we arrived in the Nore, and then I recovered, and, as you may suppose, was astonished at the busy scene, and the quantity of vessels which were going up and down the river. But I did not like my captain; he was very severe and brutal to the men; and the apprentice who was on board told me to run away, and get into another vessel, and not to bind myself apprentice to this captain, or I should be beat all day long, and be treated as bad as he was. I knew this was the case, as the captain kicked and cuffed him twenty times a day. The men said that he did not do so to me, for fear I should refuse to be his apprentice; but that, as soon as my indentures were signed, he would treat me in the same way."

"What is the meaning of indentures, papa?" said William.

"When a lad wishes to learn a trade, William, of course it is necessary that he should be taught; and if a lad, as soon as he had learnt his trade, was able to leave the person who taught him, and work for another, of course no tradesman would consent to take a boy and teach him, as he would have all his trouble for nothing.

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During the first two years that a lad is put to a trade, of course he is of little or no use to his master; an indenture, therefore, is an agreement between the tradesman, or party who teaches, and the parents of the lad, the parish, or a magistrate, by which he is bound to serve his master so many years; that, by the work he does at the latter time of his apprenticeship, he may indemnify his master for the expense and trouble which he causes at the commencement. In an indenture the master agrees to supply the apprentice with food, and clothing, and necessaries, during his whole apprenticeship; and the lad agrees to work for his master's benefit for the whole number of years that he is apprenticed: after he has served his apprenticeship, he is then free to work for himself. Boys who are sent to sea are bound apprentices in the same way as boys who are taught a trade on shore."

"Thank you, papa," replied William. "Now, Ready, please to go on."

"Well, sir, I made up my mind that I would not remain in the collier; and, as the captain had gone on shore, I had plenty of time to look about me. There was a large ship which was ready to sail, lying in the stream; I spoke to two boys

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who were at the stairs in her boat, and they told me that they were very comfortable on board, and that the captain wanted two or three apprentices. I went on board with them, and offered myself. The captain asked me a great many questions, and I told him the truth, and why I did not like to remain in the collier. He agreed to take me; and I went on shore with him, signed my indentures, and received from him a sufficient supply of clothes; and, two days afterwards, we sailed for Bombay and China."

"But you wrote to your mother, Ready, did you not?" said William.

"Yes, sir, I did; for the captain desired me to do so, and he put a few lines at the bottom to comfort her; but unfortunately, sir, the letter, which was sent on shore by the cook, never arrived. Whether he dropped it, or forgot it till after the ship sailed, and then tore it up, I do not know; but as I found out afterwards, it never did get to her hands."

"It was not your fault that the letter did not arrive safe," said Mrs. Seagrave.

"No, madam, that was not my fault; the fault had been committed before."

"Don't dwell any more upon that portion of your

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history, Ready; but tell us what took place after you sailed for the East Indies."

"Be it so, if you please. I certainly was very smart and active for my age, and soon became a great favourite on board, especially with the lady passengers, because I was such a little fellow. We arrived safely at Bombay, where our passengers went on shore, and in three weeks afterwards we sailed down the straits for China. It was war time, and we were very often chased by French privateers; but as we had a good crew and plenty of guns, none of them ventured to attack us, and we got safe to Macao, where we unloaded our cargo and took in teas. We had to wait some time for a convoy, and then sailed for England. When we were off the Isle of France, the convoy was dispersed in a gale; and three days afterwards, a French frigate bore down upon us, and after exchanging a few broadsides, we were compelled to haul down our colours. A lieutenant was sent on board with forty men, to take charge of us, for we were a very rich prize to them. The captain and most of the crew were taken on board of the frigate, but ten Lascars and the boys were left in the Indiaman, to assist in taking her into the Isle of France, which was at that time in

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the hands of the French. I thought it hard that I was to go to prison at twelve years old; but I did not care much about it, and very soon I was as gay and merry as ever. We had made the island, and were on a wind, beating up to the port, when a vessel was seen to windward, and although I could not understand what the Frenchmen said, I perceived that they were in a great fluster and very busy with their spy-glasses, and Jack Romer, one of my brother-'prentices, who had been three years at sea, said to me, 'I don't think we'll go to prison, after all, Ready, for that vessel is an English man-of-war, if I'm not mistaken.' At last she came down within three miles of us, and hoisted English colours, and fired a gun. The Frenchmen put the ship before the wind, but it was of no use; the man-of-war came up with us very fast, and then the Frenchmen began to pack up their clothes, together with all the other things which they had collected out of the property of our captain and crew; a shot was fired, which went clean over our heads, and then they left the helm, and Jack Romer went to it, and, with my help, hove the ship up in the wind; a boat came on board and took possession, and so there was one escape, at all events. When the captain of the

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English frigate heard how the Frenchmen had behaved, he ordered all their baggage to be examined as they came on board, taking away everything which they had plundered."

"It would have served them right to have taken away their own things in return," said William.

"Yes, Master William, it would have served *them* right; but still it would have been wrong to have done so; by so doing, we should have been as dishonest as they were. The captain did not take away their property, but he put them all down in the fore-hold, which, as prisoners, he was justified in doing. They sent a midshipman as prize-master on board of the vessel, and left all us, who had been taken prisoners by the French, in the vessel, to help to work her into port, as the captain did not wish to part with any more men of his own than was necessary. We soon made sail for England, quite delighted at having escaped a French prison; but, after all, we only exchanged it for a Dutch one."

"How do you mean?"

"I mean that two days afterwards, as we were rounding the Cape, another French vessel bore down upon us, and captured us. This time we did not find any friend in need, and were taken

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into Table Bay; for at that time the Cape of Good Hope was in the possession of the Dutch, who, as well as the French, were at war with England."

"How very unfortunate you were, Ready," said Mrs. Seagrave.

"Yes, madam, we were, and I can't say much in favour of a Dutch prison. However, I was very young at that time, and did not care much—I had a light heart. But bed-time is come; Miss Caroline is fast asleep, and Master Tommy has been yawning this last half-hour; so I think I had better leave off now, if you please."

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HOUSE STRUCK WITH LIGHTNING.

CHAPTER XXXV.

A HEAVY storm came on soon after they had retired to rest; the lightning was so vivid that its flashes penetrated through the chinks of the door and windows, and the thunder burst upon them with a noise which prevented them obtaining any sleep. The children cried and trembled as they lay in the arms of Mrs. Seagrave and Juno, who were almost as much alarmed themselves.

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"This is very awful," said Mr. Seagrave to Ready, for they had both risen from their beds.

"It is indeed, sir; I never knew a more terrible storm than this. I often fancy that the lightning and thunder are as the eye and voice of the Eternal in his wrath."

"Yes, indeed, Ready; it is through the elements that God speaks to man, and that we feel his power. Merciful Heaven!"

As Mr. Seagrave spoke, they were both thrown back half-stunned; a crash of thunder burst over the house, which shook everything in it; a sulphurous smell pervaded the building, and soon afterwards, when they recovered their feet, they perceived that the house was full of smoke, and they heard the wailing of the women and the shrieks of the children in the bed-places on the other side.

"God have mercy on us!" exclaimed Ready, who was the first to recover himself, and who now attempted to ascertain the injury which had been done; "the lightning has struck us, and I fear that the house is on fire somewhere."

"My wife—my children!" exclaimed Mr. Seagrave; "are they all safe?"

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"Yes, yes!" cried Mrs. Seagrave, "all safe; Tommy has come to me, but where is Juno?—Juno!"

Juno answered not. William darted to the other side of the house, and found Juno lying on her side, motionless.

"She is dead, father," cried William.

"Help me to carry her out of the house, Mr. Seagrave," said Ready, who had lifted up the poor girl; "she may be only stunned."

They carried Juno out of the house, and laid her on the ground; the rain poured down in torrents.

Ready left them for a minute, to ascertain if the house was on fire; he found that it had been in flames at the further corner, but the rain had extinguished it. He then went back to Mr. Seagrave and William, who were with Juno.

"I will attend to the girl, sir," said Ready; "go you and Master William into the house; Mrs. Seagrave will be too much frightened if she is left alone at such an awful time. See, sir! Juno is not dead—her chest heaves—she will come to very soon; thank God for it—we could but ill spare the poor girl."

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William and Mr. Seagrave returned to the house; they found Mrs. Seagrave fainting with anxiety and fear. The information they brought, that Juno was not killed by the lightning, did much to restore her. William soothed little Albert, and Tommy in a few minutes was fast asleep again in his father's arms. The storm now abated, and as the day began to break, Ready appeared with Juno, who was sufficiently recovered to be able to walk in with his support; she was put into her bed, and then Ready and Mr. Seagrave went to examine if further mischief had been done. The lightning had come in at the further end of the house, at the part where the fire-place was intended to have been made; they found that it had melted down part of the iron kettle, and, what was a greater loss, that Black Nanny, the goat, was killed—the kids were, however, unhurt.

"We have, indeed, been most mercifully preserved," said Mr. Seagrave.

"Yes, sir; thanks be to God for all his goodness," replied Ready. "I thought poor Juno was gone."

"I think we have a large roll of copper wire, Ready; have we not?" said Mr. Seagrave.

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"Yes, sir, I was just thinking of it myself; we will have a lightning conductor up the first thing."

"No, Ready; we will return out thanks to God for our preservation first, and use our human precautions afterwards."

"True, sir, we are bound to do so; and with grateful hearts."

It was now broad daylight. Mrs. Seagrave dressed herself and the children, and as soon as she was ready, Mr. Seagrave read such portions of the Psalms as were appropriate, and they earnestly joined in a prayer of thankfulness and humility. William went out to prepare the breakfast, and Ready procured the coil of copper wire from those stores which were stowed under the bed-places. This he unrolled, and stretched it out straight, and then went for the ladder, which was at the outhouse which they had commenced building. As soon as breakfast was over, Ready and Mr. Seagrave went out again to fix up the lightning conductor, leaving William to do the work of Juno, who still remained fast asleep in her bed.

"I think, sir," said Ready, "that one of those

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two trees, which are close together, will suit the best; they are not too near the house, and yet quite near enough for the wire to attract the lightning."

"Yes, I agree with you, Ready; but we must not leave them both standing."

"No, sir, but we shall require them both to get up and fix the wire; after that we will cut down the other."

Ready put his ladder against one of the trees, and taking with him the hammer and a bag of large spike nails, drove one of the nails into the trunk of the tree till it was deep enough in to bear his weight; he then drove in another above it, and so he continued to do, standing upon one of them while he drove in another above, till he had reached the top of the tree, close to the boughs; he then descended, and, leaving the hammer behind him, took up a saw and small axe, and in about ten minutes he had cut off the head of the cocoa-nut tree, which remained a tall, bare pole.

"Take care, Ready, how you come down," said Mr. Seagrave, anxiously.

"Never fear, sir," replied Ready; "I'm not so young as I was, but I have been too often at the mast-head, much higher than this."

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Ready came down again, and then cut down a small pole, to fix, with a thick piece of pointed wire at the top of it, on the head of the cocoa-nut tree. He then went up, lashed the small pole to the head of the tree, made the end of the copper wire fast to the pointed wire, and then he descended. The other tree near to it was then cut down, and the lower end of the wire buried in the ground at the bottom of the tree on which the lightning conductor had been fixed.

"That's a good job done, sir," said Ready, wiping his face, for he was warm with the work.

"Yes," replied Mr. Seagrave; "and we must put up another near the outhouse, or we may lose our stores."

"Very true, sir."

"You understand this, William; don't you?" said his father.

"O yes, papa; lightning is attracted by metal, and will now strike the point instead of the house, run down the wire, and only tear up the ground below. You explained it to me before."

"Well, and you have not forgotten it, Master William," said Ready. "It's coming on again, sir, as thick as ever," observed the old man; "we shall do no work to-day, I'm afraid. I'll just

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go and see where the stock are; I hope we have lost no more of them. Perhaps you and William will bury the poor goat; you will be able to do that before the storm begins."

Mr. Seagrave and William pulled Nanny out by the legs, and buried her under the lightning conductor. By the time they had finished, Ready returned; he had found the goats and sheep, and he had brought with him the other goat, which had kidded during the storm.

"The Lord gives, and the Lord takes away, sir," said Ready, as he came to them. "I was fearful that we should have nothing to give the poor kids which had lost their mother, but now this goat can rear them all four. It will be rather hard upon her, but she must do it; we will feed her well, at all events."

Ready led in the other goat, and put her in the same place were Black Nanny had been, and then they sat down to dinner. Juno was now up again, and said that she was quite well, with the exception of a headache. As Ready had predicted, the rain now came on again with great violence, and it was impossible to do any work out of doors. At the request of William, he continued his narrative.

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Narrative of Old Ready.

"Well, Master William, as soon as they had let go their anchor in Table Bay, we were all ordered on shore, and sent up to a prison close to the Government Gardens. We were not very carefully watched, as it appeared impossible for us to get away, and I must say we were well treated in every respect; but we were told that we should be sent to Holland in the first man-of-war which came into the bay, and we did not much like the idea.

"There were, as I told you, some other boys as well as myself, who belonged to the Indiaman, and we kept very much together, not only because we were more of an age, but because we had been shipmates so long. Two of these boys, one of whom I have mentioned as Jack Romer, and the other Will Hastings, were my particular friends; and one day, as we were sitting under the wall, warming ourselves, for it was winter time, Romer said, 'How very easy it would be for us to get away, if we only knew where to go to.' 'Yes,' replied Hastings; 'but where are we to go to, if it is not to the Hottentots and wild savages; and when we get there, what can we do?—we

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can't get any farther.' 'Well,' said I, 'I would rather be living free among savages, than be shut up in a prison.' That was our first talk on the subject, but we had many others afterwards; and as the one or two Dutch soldiers who stood sentry spoke English, and we could talk a little Dutch, we obtained a good deal of information from them; for they had very often been sent to the frontiers of the colony. We continued to ask questions, and to talk among ourselves for about two months, and at last we resolved that we would make our escape. Now, you see, Master William, this was a very foolish business, and shows how unfit boys are to judge for themselves: we were only running into hardship and danger, without the slightest chance of our escaping. We should have done much better if we had remained where we were; but there is no putting old heads upon young shoulders. We saved up our provisions, bought some long Dutch knives, tied our few clothes up in bundles, and one dark night we contrived to remain in the yard without being perceived, when the prisoners were locked up; and raising a long pole, which lay in the yard, to the top of the wall, with a good deal of scrambling we contrived

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to get over it, and made off as fast as we could for the Table Mountain."

ESCAPING FROM PRISON.

"What was your reason for going there, Ready?"

"Why, Hastings, who was the oldest, and, I will say, the sharpest of the three, said that we had better stay up there for a few days, till we had made up our minds what to do, and try if we could not procure a musket or two, and am-

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munition; for, you see, we had money, as, when the Indiaman was first taken, the captain divided a keg of rupees, which was on board, among the officers and men, in proportion to the wages due to them, thinking it was better for the crew to have the money, than to leave it for the Frenchmen; and we had spent very little while in prison, for spirits were not allowed, and we boys had not begun to chew tobacco, or smoke. There was also another reason why he persuaded us to go to the Table Mountain, which was, that as soon as our escape was found out, they would send parties to look for us, thinking, of course, that we had made for the interior; and we should have less chance of being retaken if we travelled after the first search was over. The soldiers had told us of the lions, and other wild animals, and how dangerous it was to travel, and Hastings said, that not finding us, they would suppose we had been destroyed by the wild beasts, and would not look for us any more. You see we had some sort of calculation, although we were foolish boys."

"Foolish indeed," observed Mrs. Seagrave, "to set off you knew not where, in a country full of wild beasts and savages."

"True enough, madam," replied Ready; "and

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now I will tell you what happened to us ere we were three hours on our journey. We ran at first until we were out of breath, and then we walked on as fast as we could—not going right up the mountain, but keeping a slanting direction to the south-west, so as to get away from the town, and more towards False Bay;—you recollect I showed you that bay, Master William, as we passed the Cape of Good Hope."

"Yes, I remember, Ready."

"We had walked about four hours, and began to feel very tired when the day dawned, and then we looked out for a place to conceal ourselves in. We soon found a cave with a narrow entrance, large enough inside to hold half a dozen of such lads as we were, and we crawled in. It was quite dry, and, as we were very tired, we lay down with our heads on our bundles, intending to take a nap; but we had hardly made ourselves comfortable and shut our eyes, when we heard such a screaming and barking, that we were frightened out of our lives almost. We could not think what it could be. At last Hastings peeped out, and began to laugh; so Romer and I looked out also, and there we saw about one hundred and fifty large baboons, leaping and tumbling about in such

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a way as I never saw; they were bigger than we were — indeed, when they stood on their hind-legs they were much taller, and they had very large white tusks. Some of them were females, with young ones on their backs, and they were just as active as the males. At last thay played such antics, that we all burst out into a loud laugh, and we had not ceased when we found the grinning face of one of the largest of those brutes close to our own. He had dropped from the rock above us, like magic. We all three backed into the cave, very much frightened, for the teeth of the animal were enormous, and he looked very savage. He gave a shrill cry, and we perceived all the rest of the herd coming to him as fast as they could. I said that the cave was large enough to hold six of us; but there was a sort of inner cave, which we had not gone into as the entrance was much smaller. Romer cried out, 'Let us go into the inside cave—we can get in one by one;' and he backed in; Hastings followed with his bundle, and I hurried in after him just in time; for the baboons, who had been chattering to each other for half a minute, came into the outer cave just as I crawled into the inner. Five or six of them came in, all males, and very large.

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The first thing they did, was to lay hold of Romer's bundle, which they soon opened — at once they seized his provisions and rammed them into their pouches, and then they pulled out the other things and tore them all to pieces.

BABOONS IN THE CAVE.

As soon as they had done with the bundle, two of them came towards the inner cave, and saw us. One put his long paw in to seize us; but Hastings gave him a slash with his knife, and the animal

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took his paw out again fast enough. It was laughable to see him hold out his hand to the others, and then taste the blood with the tip of his tongue; and such a chattering I never heard —they were evidently very angry, and more came into the cave and joined them; then another put in his hand, and received a cut just as before. At last two or three at once tried to pull us out, but we beat them all off with our knives, wounding them all very severely. For about an hour they continued their attempts, and then they went away out of the cave, but remained at the mouth, shrieking and howling. We began to be very tired of this work, and Romer said that he wished he was back in prison again; and so did I, I can assure you; but there was no getting out, for had we gone out the animals would have torn us to pieces. We agreed that we had no chance but the animals becoming tired and going away; and most anxious we were, for the excitement had made us very thirsty, and we wanted water. We remained for two hours in this way imprisoned by baboons, when all of a sudden a shrill cry was given by one of the animals, and the whole herd went galloping off as fast as they could, screaming louder than ever. We waited

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for a short time to see if they would return, and then Hastings crawled out first, and looking out of the cave very cautiously, said that they were all gone, and that he could see nothing but a Hottentot sitting down watching some cattle which were browsing; we therefore all came out, very happy at our release. That was our first adventure, Master William; we had plenty afterwards; but I think it is now time we should go to bed. It is my opinion we shall have a fine day to-morrow, sir; but there's no saying."

"I do so want to hear what happened to you afterwards, Ready," said William.

"Well, so you shall, sir; but there's a time for everything, and this is bed-time, unless you like to go with me, Master William; the weather has cleared up, and I want to catch a fish or two for to-morrow."

"Yes, I will, Ready, for I'm not at all tired."

"Well then, here are the lines: good night, madam; good night, Mr. Seagrave."

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JUNO PRAYING.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

As Ready had predicted, the weather set in fine for several days after the violent storm of which we have made mention. Juno was weak, and suffering for some time. She had been struck down by the lightning, but she was able to cook the dinner and do light work. Poor Juno appeared to be very sensible of the wonderful preservation which she had had from the lightning.

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She had always been a good girl, and attentive whenever the Bible was read, but now she did not appear to think that the usual morning and evening services were sufficient to express her gratitude, and several times when Ready went out first in the morning, he had perceived Juno kneeling down under a cocoa-nut tree, secretly and devoutly returning thanks for having been so mercifully spared. Ready, of course, did not appear to notice her, but he said more than once to himself as he walked away, "There's more good under that dark skin than under many a white one, and her prayers are as acceptable to the Most High as those of kings and princes."

For a fortnight, with little intermission, the weather was fine, and during that time, Ready, Mr. Seagrave, and William worked from daylight till dusk at the storehouse, which they were so anxious to complete, and were so tired when their work was over, that even William did not ask Ready to go on with his history. At last the storehouse was complete, thatched and wattled in on three sides, leaving one open for ventilation; the lower part, which had been arranged for the folding of the stock at night and during the rainy season, was also wattled in with cocoa-nut boughs

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on three sides, and made a very comfortable retreat for the animals. The winding path to the storehouse was also cut through the cocoa-nut grove, but the stumps were not removed, as they could not spare the time. All the stores that they had brought round were put into the storehouse, and they were now ready to take up some other job. It was, however, agreed that, on the day after the building was finished, they should all have a day's holiday, which they certainly did require. William caught some fish, a turtle was speared and wheeled up to the house; and they not only had a holiday, but a feast. Mr. Seagrave and William had been walking on the beach with Mrs. Seagrave and the children, while Ready was assisting Juno in cutting up the turtle; they had shown Mrs. Seagrave the storehouse, and the goats with the four kids had been led there, as there was no longer any occasion for them to remain in the house. The weather was beautiful, and they agreed to go and examine the garden. They found that the seeds had not yet commenced sprouting, notwithstanding the heavy rains.

"I should have thought that so much rain would have made them come up," said Mrs. Seagrave.

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"No, my dear," replied Mr. Seagrave; "they require more of the sun than they will have till the rainy season is nearly over; a few days like this, and they will soon be above ground."

"Let us sit down on this knoll,—it is quite dry," said Mrs. Seagrave. "I little thought," continued she, taking Mr. Seagrave's hand after she was seated, "that I could have been so happy in a desert island. How fast the time flies. I thought I should feel the loss of books very severely, but I really do not think that I could have found time to read."

"Employment is a source of happiness, especially when you are usefully employed. An industrious person is always a happy person, provided he is not obliged to work too hard; and even where you have cause for unhappiness, nothing makes you forget it so soon as occupation. I really believe that an idle person is never truly happy, and that too much work is preferable to having nothing whatever to do."

"But, mamma, we shall not always have so much to do as we have now," said William.

"Of course not," replied Mr. Seagrave; "and then we shall find our books a great source of

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enjoyment. I am anxious to go to the other side of the island, and see what have been spared to us, and whether they have been much damaged; but that cannot be until after the rains are over, and we can use the boat again."

"What are you about, Tommy?"

"I'm killing little beetles," replied Tommy; "I kill plenty."

"But why should you kill them, Tommy?—they don't hurt you."

"I don't like beetles."

"That's not a reason, Tommy; you must not kill whatever you don't like. If they bite you, or sting you, then you may destroy them; but it is very cruel to kill animals when there is no occasion. Who made those beetles, Tommy? Who made everything?"

"God," replied Tommy, after a little while.

"Yes, God made them, and intended them to live out their short lives; he made all creatures, and he gave them to us for our use, but not to abuse his goodness, by wantonly destroying them. Do you understand me, Tommy?"

"Juno kills flies," replied Tommy.

"Yes, because it is sometimes necessary; but she does not kill them merely because she has

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nothing else to do: remember what I have said to you, Tommy. We may well remember that they are God's creatures, my dear boy," said Mr. Seagrave, turning to William: "look at this minute insect which is crawling on my finger; what a number of legs it has!"

"Yes, I have seen something like it in old books. How fast it runs with its little legs; thinner than hairs—how wonderful!"

"Yes, William," replied Mr. Seagrave, "we have only to examine into any portion, however small, of creation, and we are immediately filled with wonder; we have only to look around us, wherever we may be, and we have food for contemplation. There is nothing which points out to us the immensity and the omniscience of the Almighty more than the careful provision which has been made by Him for the smallest and most insignificant of created beings. This little animal is perhaps one of many millions, who have their term of existence, and their enjoyment, as well as we have. What is it?—an insect of the minutest kind, a nothing in creation; yet has the same care been bestowed upon its formation: these little legs, hardly visible, have their muscles and their sinews; and every other portion of its body is as

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complete, as fearfully and wonderfully fashioned as our own. Such is His will; and what insects we ought to feel ourselves, when compared to the God of power and of love!

"Let me also point out to you, William," continued Mr. Seagrave, "the infinity of His creative power, displayed in endless variety, perceptible even in objects of the same nature, and to careless eyes of the same form and mould. Amongst the millions of men that have been born, and died, never yet were there seen two faces or two bodies exactly alike; nay, if you could examine the leaves upon the trees, although there may be millions upon millions in the forest, you could not discover two leaves of precisely the same form and make."

"I believe not," replied William, "I have often tried in vain; yet some animals are so much alike, that I cannot perceive any difference between them—sheep, for instance."

"Very true; *you* cannot tell the difference, because you have not examined them; but a shepherd, if he has seven hundred sheep under his care, will know every one of them from the others, which proves that there must be a great difference between them, although not perceptible

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to the casual observer; and the same, no doubt, is the case with all other classes of animals. In everything made, His variety is infinite.

"And observe again, my dear William, what effect of human ingenuity can approach to the perfection of structure, in the simplest formation by the Almighty hand. Look at this small flower; examine the beauty of its colour and form; consider the lavish profusion with which myriads of such flowers spring up to adorn the earth, and yet how matchless! Does not our Redeemer beautifully point it out, where he says, 'Consider the lilies of the field; they toil not, neither do they spin; and yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these?'"

"Yes, Master William," observed Ready; "I have often wondered over the things that I have seen, and I have even in my ignorance felt what your papa has now told you; and it has brought into my mind the words of Job: 'When I consider, I am afraid of him.'"

"Papa," said William, after a pause in the conversation, "you have referred to the variety—the wonderful variety—shown in the works of the Deity. Tell me some other prominent feature in creation."

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"One of the most remarkable in creation, William, is order."

"Point out to me, papa, where and in what that quality is most observable."

"Everywhere and in everything, my dear boy; whether we cast our eyes up to the heavens above us, or penetrate into the bowels of the earth, the principle of order is everywhere—everything is governed by fixed laws, which cannot be disobeyed: we have order in the seasons, in the tides, in the movement of the heavenly bodies, in the instinct of animals, in the duration of life assigned to each; from the elephant who lives more than a century, to the ephemeral fly, whose whole existence is limited to an hour.

"Inanimate nature is subject to the same unvarying laws. Metals, and rocks, and earths, and all the mineral kingdom, follow one law in their crystallization, never varying from the form assigned to them; each atom depositing itself in the allotted place, until that form is complete: we have order in production, order in decay; but all is simple to Him by whom the planets were thrown out into space, and were commanded to roll in their eternal orbits."

"I never do look up on a starry night without

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feeling inclined to pray," said William. "The stars in the heavens are beautiful, but they are not placed there in order."

"The fixed stars do not appear to us to be in order—that is, they do not stud the heavens at equal distances from each other as we view them; but you must recollect that they are at very different distances from this earth, spreading over an infinity of space; and we have reason to suppose that this our earth is but a mere unit in the multitude of created worlds, only one single portion of an infinite whole. As the stars now appear to us, they are useful to the mariner, enabling him to cross the trackless seas; and to the astronomer, who calculates the times and seasons. Depend upon it, William, it is for wise reasons that we view the stars as we now do, so profusely scattered in the heavens."

"What do you mean, papa, by saying that this world of ours is supposed to be but one of a multitude of created worlds?"

"William, our little knowledge is bounded to this our own earth, which we have ascertained very satisfactorily to be but one of several planets revolving round our own sun. I say our own

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sun, because we have every reason to suppose that each of those fixed stars, and myriads now not visible to the naked eye, are all suns, bright and glorious as our own, and of course throwing light and heat upon unseen planets revolving round them. Does not this give you some idea of the vastness, the power, and the immensity of God?"

"One almost loses oneself in the imagination," said Mrs. Seagrave.

"Yes, dearest," replied Mr. Seagrave; "and it has been surmised by some, who have felt in their hearts the magnificence of the great Architect, that there must be some point of view in space where all those glorious suns, which seem to us confused in the heavens above us, will appear all symmetrically arranged, will *there* be viewed in regular order, whirling round in one stupendous and perfect system of beauty and design; and where can that be, if it is not in that heaven which we hope to gain?"

There was a silence for a few moments, when William said, "They say that there are people who are atheists, papa. How can they be so if they only look around them? I'm sure a mere examination of the works of God ought to make them good Christians."

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"No, my child," replied Mr. Seagrave; "there you are in error. Few deny the existence of a Deity; and an examination of his works may make them good and devout men, but not Christians. There are good men to be found under every denomination, whether they be Jews, Mahomedans, or Pagans; but they are not Christians."

"Very true, papa."

"Faith in things seen, if I may use the term, my dear child—faith produced by an examination of the works of creation—may induce men to acknowledge the power and goodness of the Almighty, but it will not make them wise to salvation; for that end it is necessary, as the Apostle saith, to have faith in things not seen. There is little merit in acknowledging what is evident to our senses; the faith required of us as Christians, and to which are attached the great and gracious promises of the Gospel, is faith in a sublime, and to us, incomprehensible mystery—the incarnation of the Son of God, who descended upon earth and took the form of man, and actually suffered for our redemption. Still the examination of the works of God will always produce an effect, which, by the divine blessing, may tend eventually to make those Christians who as yet

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are not so. The visible works of the Creator prove beyond all doubt his stupendous power and his overflowing love; and, once convinced of these, we ought to be better prepared to receive those tenets of a Christian's faith, which are to us incomprehensible, but which nothing but his love to us would have suggested. What saith the Apostle? 'Herein is love—not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.'"

END OF VOL. I.

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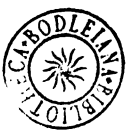

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